the weekly
Standard

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PBS'S PONTIFICATOR
STEPHEN F. HAYES

The Mullahs' Manhattan Project

Do we dare let these men acquire nukes?

by Reuel Marc Gerecht

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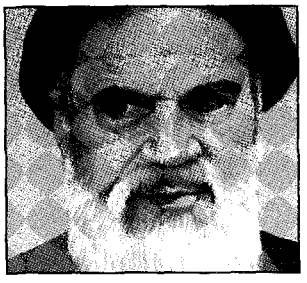

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What a Real Newspaper Editor Looks Like

Amid all the (admittedly delightful) hullabaloo over Jayson Blair and Rick Bragg, it's important to remember, THE SCRAPBOOK thinks, that Howell Raines and Gerald Boyd aren't the only people directing newsroom staff at a big-league American paper. New York's isn't the only *Times*, for example. There's the Los Angeles one, too, where editor John Carroll recently circulated an admirably candid internal memorandum about a chronic but generally overlooked problem in American daily journalism: heavy-footed bias, conscious or otherwise, against the pro-life argument in American politics.

Here's Carroll's May 22 memo, first obtained and publicized by Kevin Roderick's excellent blog "L.A. Observed" (*www.laobserved.com*):

To: SectionEds
Subject: Credibility/abortion

I'm concerned about the perception—and the occasional reality—that the *Times* is a liberal, "politically correct" newspaper. Generally speaking, this is an inaccurate view, but occasionally we prove our critics right. We did so today with the front-page story on the bill in Texas that would require abortion doctors to counsel patients that they may be risking breast cancer.

The apparent bias of the writer and/or the desk reveals itself in the third paragraph, which characterizes such bills in Texas and elsewhere as requiring "so-called counseling of patients." I don't think people on the anti-abortion side would consider it "so-called," a phrase that is loaded with derision.

The story makes a strong case that the link between abortion and breast cancer is widely discounted among researchers, but I wondered as I read it whether somewhere there might exist some credible scientist who believes in it.

Such a person makes no appearance in the story's lengthy passage about the scientific issue. We do quote one of the sponsors of the bill, noting that he "has a professional background in property management." Seldom will you read a cheaper shot than this. Why, if this is germane, wouldn't we point to legislators on the other side who are similarly bereft of scientific credentials?

It is not until the last three paragraphs of the story that we finally surface a professor of biology and endocrinology who believes the abortion/cancer connection is valid. But do we quote him as to why he believes this? No. We quote his political views.

Apparently the scientific argument for the anti-abortion side is so absurd that we don't need to waste our readers' time with it.

The reason I'm sending this note to all section editors is that I want everyone to understand how serious I am about purging all political bias from our coverage. We may happen to live in a political atmosphere that is suffused with liberal values (and is unreflective of the nation as a whole), but we are not going to push a liberal agenda in the news pages of the *Times*.

I'm no expert on abortion, but I know enough to believe that it presents a profound philosophical, religious and scientific question, and I respect people on both sides of the debate. A newspaper that is intelligent and fair-minded will do the same.

Let me know if you'd like to discuss this. ◆

The Young and the Restless

It's not often you find THE SCRAPBOOK pulling for *New York Times* management. We confess that ever since Jayson Blair was exposed as a coked-up and deeply malevolent con man (his book proposal's working title: *Burning Down My Master's House*), we've joined the world in assuming that this troubled youngster was merely the tailfin of a rotting fish bearing the head of a certain self-described "white man from Alabama." Maybe it's stinkiest, though, not in the *Times* editor's suites—but right out there on the newsroom floor?

The *New York Observer*'s Sridhar Pappu brings word that instead of quietly plying their trade and proving their competence after Blair's spectacular flame-out, *Times* tyros are using the episode as a novel opportunity for career advancement. It used to be the fashion to mau-mau *Times* management about racism. Post-Blair, the blackmail *du jour* appears to be ageism. No doubt encouraged by the huggy-bear, self-flagellation throughout the building, junior *Times* journos are drafting a memo demanding that editors "end favoritism in the newsroom, develop transparent procedures for filling open positions, and provide other amenities for young reporters eager for advancement."

"We figured it was better to speak collectively as one voice rather than individually," says 27-year-old *Times* guppie Jennifer 8. Lee, whose middle name—*not* a typo—speaks collectively on behalf of several Arabic numerals, rather than individually on behalf of her very own self. Ms. Lee and her fellow bratpackers, according to Pappu, want something called a "registry of hopes and dreams" to help sensitize their bosses to the special agonies of

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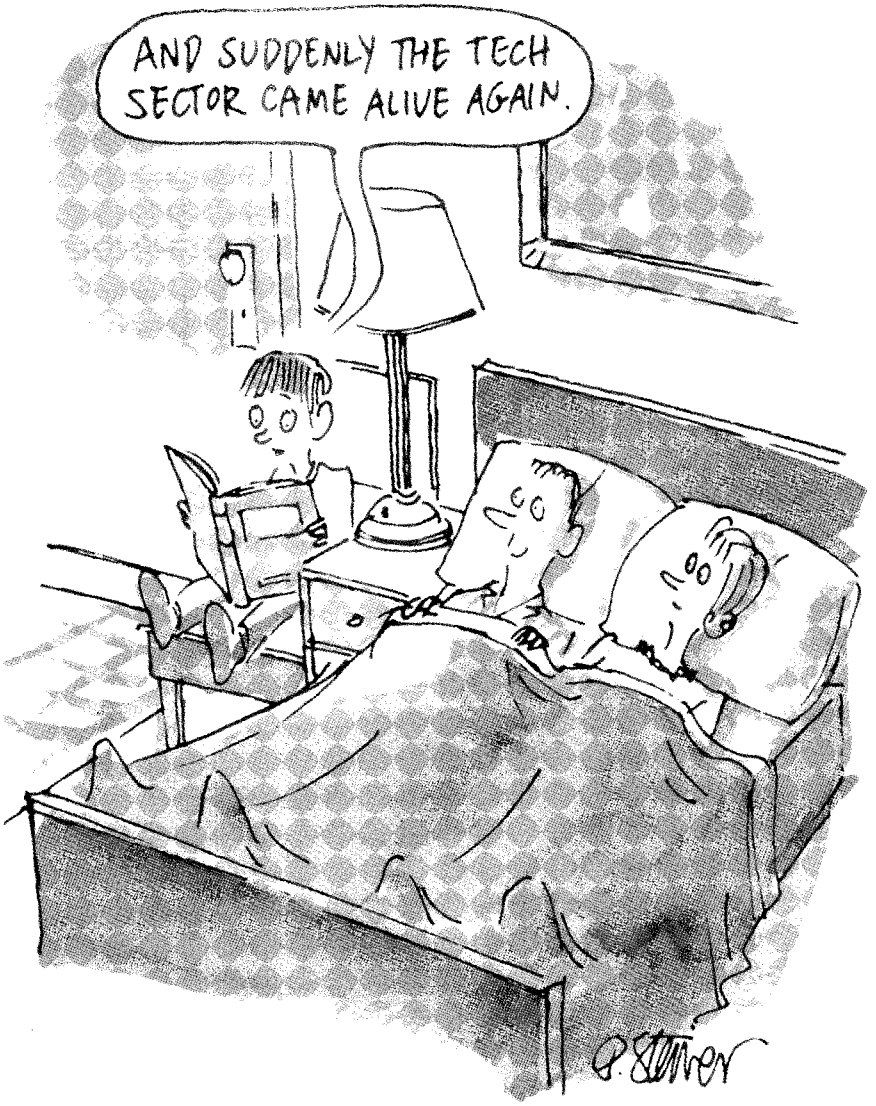

youthful ambition. They also want more explicit guidance about qualifications requirements for open staff positions, newsroom mentors assigned to push their careers, and free journalism instruction outside the newsroom.

Umm . . . aren't full-time newsroom staff at the *Times*, even the youngest of them, supposed to be rather beyond the point where "journalism instruction" is required? Here's a refresher course for the *Times* whiner-boppers: Try finding some facts and writing them up intelligibly.

No word yet on whether Howell Raines will cave to demands for a sushi bar and shiatsu massages. ♦

Elis and Other Jews

James Kirchick of the *New York Sun* reports on an uproar at Yale caused by an e-mail distributed last Saturday—by a faculty member, no less—that singles out a group of 64 students by name (mostly Jewish) and criticizes them as a "pro-war cabal." Said "cabal," the message from associate professor of genetics Mazin Qumsiyeh contended, "subscribes to the same Straussian theology that the no-cons [sic] around Bush have been pushing." Also, "there is significant overlap of this list with the 'Yale Friends of Israel.'" Qumsiyeh's e-mail was posted on a listserve maintained by the antiwar Coalition for Peace at Yale. It reached hundreds of students.

Along with his more obvious anti-Semitism problem, Qumsiyeh appears to have difficulty with facts. His e-mail indicated that the listed "cabal" were members of the pro-war Yale College Students for Democracy. Turns out, though, that while all the listed students were members of Yale Friends of Israel, many did not belong to the other outfit. Several had even taken public positions opposing the war. And few of them, we wager, have the foggiest idea what "Straussian theology" might be.

Qumsiyeh, co-founder of Al-Awda, the Palestine Right to Return Coalition, is well known for this sort of thing. He recently published a piece in the *Jordan Times* questioning whether the United States wasn't "becoming a mirror of Nazi Germany in the 1930s." Last April Qumsiyeh raised eyebrows when he distributed another mass e-mail linked to another list of Jews: "Prominent Jews in the Media."

So here's THE WEEKLY STANDARD's list of Prominent Idiots at Yale:

1. Mazin Qumsiyeh. ♦

At Least They're Good Comedians

"Democrats these days lack the killer instinct that it takes to sell blunt, demagogic messages," reports an obviously disappointed Adam Clymer in the May 26 *New York Times*. "As Bob Shrum, a prominent consultant for 30 years, said: 'It's probably a weakness that we're not real haters.'"

Credit the habitually partisan Clymer with unaccustomed wit. As everyone in Washington knows, Bob Shrum's prominence in American politics is owed almost entirely to his expertise in the kind of blunt, demagogic messages that only real haters know how to send. ♦

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Casual

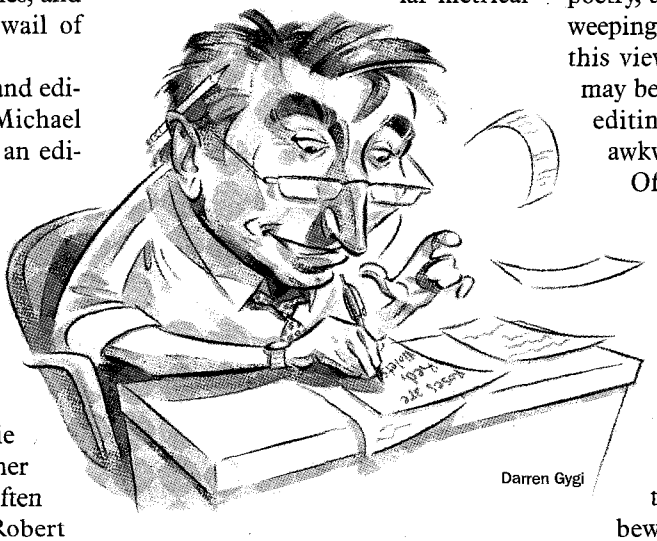
The Poetry of Rejection

I once picked up the phone and called an author who'd submitted a piece of writing. I thought I could publish it, I said, but there was something a little off in the final line, and maybe she and I could work our way through the problem together. First there was a silence from her, then a half-choked-off sob, then a pair of imperfectly controlled sniffles, and finally a full, broken-down wail of weeping.

Now, it's true that authors and editors are natural enemies. Michael Kinsley once said that, from an editor's point of view, the ideal author is someone who's run down by a truck twenty minutes after turning in his copy. But never woman bewept her babe as this was weeping, and tears, bitter tears, were a new publishing experience for me. Noemie Emery doesn't sniffle if I edit her work. Joseph Epstein doesn't often begin to sob. I once told Robert Kagan—in that supercilious voice all copy editors seem to learn on their first day of work—that pronouns in strict grammar shouldn't refer to genitives. And it's true he gave me a kind of odd, sideways look, but you can't exactly say he wept.

The difference with the tearful author, however, was that she had written not a magazine essay, but a poem. One of the things I do on weekends and late at night—far too late at night, in fact, for much good judgment—is edit the poetry section for the journal *First Things*. And you haven't drunk deep of life until you've tried to edit poetry—by which I think I mean you haven't gotten all the way down to the bottom of the cup.

It's not just the angry letters that begin, "I haven't heard from you about the poem I sent four days ago," or the embarrassing letters that begin, "I haven't heard from you about the poem I sent eight months ago." There's an anthology waiting to be assembled from authors' cover letters, most of which prove that poetry and prose are alien arts. How is one to reply to a letter that reads: "Enclosed are four poems written in no particular metrical pattern, if one at all"? Or the notes that begin with something like, "I am a poet at present in the Tuscaloosa County Jail"?



Darren Gygi

The real problem, however, is the poetry that lurks beneath those cover letters, waiting to pounce. Marvelously hopeless poems—like the one that opened, "Hello, butter-colored worm"—almost make it worthwhile. But far too much of the submitted verse is something like the raw pain of tormented animals, and its inarticulate agony would be unbearable if it weren't first unreadable. The little old lady from Dubuque doesn't pen Hallmark-card rhymes of gentle platitudes these days. She writes free verse about how she lost her virginity in the spring of 1939 and why her father was a soul-destroying tyrant. Day after day, the mail brings unendurable sorrow and anger and ache: the raw stuff of poetry, without the poetry.

The editor Neal Kozodoy tells the story that he once proposed *Commentary* magazine should start publishing poetry again—but this time, poetry treated like any other text: commissioned for specific topics, selected for its public purpose, and edited for meaning and tightness just as the magazine's essays are edited. From the response, you might have thought he'd suggested firebombing the library: Poetry is privileged writing; it is what it is and can't be touched—which means a magazine has either to accept what comes in or to refuse all poetry, as *Commentary* still does. The weeping poet on the telephone shares this view of what a poem is. And it may be true. But it makes the job of editing that poetry a curious and awkward thing.

Of course, day after day, the mail also brings good work, poetry one is proud to publish. But for magazines like *First Things*, the rejection rate is over 99 percent, and all those unusable poems must be ploughed through as well—and while I'm doing it, about the best you can say is beware, beware his flashing eyes, his floating hair. Sheer plod may actually make plough-down sillion shine, but I think I'd have to ask the author for a little more clarity. Still, good fences make good neighbors, that's obvious enough. I should have been a pair of ragged claws scuttling across the floors of silent seas. That needs a comma after "claws," maybe, but I'm not the man to do it. Not today. The native hue of resolution has been sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought. The force that through the green fuse drives the flower is driving me mad. Weave a circle round him thrice and close your eyes with holy dread, for he on honeydew hath fed and edited some poetry. I have heard the poets singing, each to each. I do not think that they will sing to me.

J. Bottum

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Is the *Times*'s Time Up?

After reading Christopher Caldwell's "The *New York Times*'s Meltdown" (May 26), I would like to see that lion of the liberal media suffer a fate it has endorsed for others these many years through its reporting and editorial pages—litigation.

As a lawyer, I think a large and expensive class action against the *New York Times* would be a reasonable and appropriate method for compensating those who purchased a false and misleading product.

Every subscriber should receive a full refund for every paper in which Jayson Blair authored a false story. A special fund should be established to compensate the rest of us who purchased the paper from a newsstand or other vendor.

The First Amendment is not implicated here. No person has been libeled. This is about selling a product that is different than advertised. This is about the consequences of a defective manufacturing process. Return the money, improve the product, and rebuild your name.

Michael W. Mitchell
Raleigh, NC

As a marketing strategist, I've been following the *New York Times*'s downward trajectory with particular interest. In recent years, the *Times* has crossed the Rubicon from implicit bias to overt activism. This course has exposed the *New York Times* brand to a great risk, and now the inevitable results are coming back to haunt the paper.

The Blair affair is particularly telling in this regard—it lays bare not only the consequences of an activist newsroom, but also its underpinnings. Unless the *Times* returns to its old ways, this scandal will not be its last. "All the news that's fit to print" just doesn't mesh with "All the bias we can get away with."

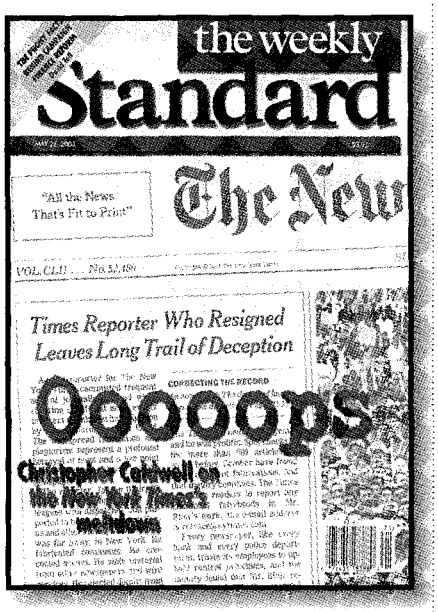
From a marketing-strategy perspective, the *Times*'s editors now face a clear choice between pushing agendas on the one hand, and selling news on the other. Since readers buy papers for news and not agendas, this choice is also a matter of red or black ink.

How many more encounters with scandal will it take for the *New York Times* to rediscover the reason why it became an American institution in the first place?

Marc E. Babej
President, Reason-Inc.
New York, NY

Campaign Corruption

In the May 2 decision regarding the constitutionality of the McCain-Feingold campaign reforms, two of three judges validated the vast majority of findings from the Brennan Center's study of political television advertising, relying on our research to form many of their conclusions. As Judge Richard J. Leon (appointed by the current President


the weekly
Standard
"All the News That's Fit to Print"
The New
Times Reporter Who Resigned Leaves Long Trail of Deception
Ooooops
Christopher Caldwell on the New York Times's meltdown

Bush) wrote: "I find that although the *Buying Time* studies contain some flaws and shortcomings . . . those shortcomings do not detract from the studies' credibility and reliability."

David Tell's "An Appearance of Corruption" (May 26) ignores that reality to tell his version of the story. For example, Tell approvingly quotes a statistic claiming that 64 percent of political television ads that name a candidate in the final weeks of an election and target that candidate's constituency are not intended to influence the election outcome. In other words, two out of every three political ads in the run-up to Election Day are "altogether genuine issue broadcasts." It doesn't take a political scientist to recognize this is nonsense. Anyone who has read the district court's opinions or the briefs in the case knows better. For that matter, anyone who owns a television set knows better.

Tell makes much of the Brennan Center's mission, arguing that our motives undermine the validity of our findings. The federal court decided otherwise. Judge Leon wrote, "while I agree that the primary purpose of the *Buying Time* studies was to further campaign finance reform, I do not find that this fact skewed the results of the study," and Judge Colleen Kollar-Kotelly similarly relied on our research.

Getting to the heart of the matter, Judge Kollar-Kotelly found that big donations "are given with the expectation that they will provide the donor with access to federal officials, that this expectation is fostered by the national parties, and that this expectation is often realized." No wonder opponents of reform would rather level baseless criticisms at the Brennan Center's study than talk about the discredited campaign system they are defending.

Frederick A.O. Schwarz Jr.
Interim President, Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law
New York, NY

There is a breathless quality to David Tell's "An Appearance of Corruption." So much innuendo, so little time. But Tell does summarize the gist of many of the attacks aimed at my research in *Buying Time*, a focus of the litigation over the constitutionality of the new campaign finance reform law. Two simple points suffice as a response to this barrage.

The first is the old saw about there being "two sides to every story." No one is obligated to believe my version of the story, but I think anyone interested in determining the truth would certainly want to consider it. Indeed, there is a voluminous, public record on all of the issues that Tell writes about. I invite him and The Weekly Standard's readers to examine it. These materials are readily available at *www.campaignlegalcenter.org* and elsewhere on the web. Among the things they will discover—contrary to the impression created in Tell's piece—is

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that the 7 percent figure reported in *Buying Time* was correct, the Brennan Center's momentary uncertainty notwithstanding.

Second, it is important to consider the nature of the criticism. The study of TV advertising that I undertook was extensive and complex. It is certainly vulnerable to a variety of critiques about its methodology and findings. Yet the attacks on *Buying Time* focused largely on process and personalities, not the merits of the evidence or arguments. If I'm wrong—and I don't think I am—the most convincing evidence would be a demonstration of my mistake(s), not just this questioning of my motives and ability. The plaintiffs originally planned to do just that, announcing their intention to replicate parts of the study to demonstrate its errors. They never produced such a report.

There are serious issues at stake in this case about what the campaign finance system should look like and how the First Amendment should be applied. They are worthy of serious debate, not the one-sided parody that Tell provides in his article.

JONATHAN KRASNO
Yale University
New Haven, CT

DAVID TELL RESPONDS: Just to put things in proper perspective right off the bat: If I were a candidate for federal office rather than a journalist, and the above complaints from Messrs. Schwarz and Krasno were Brennan Center-financed television broadcasts rather than letters to the editor, their texts would be flatly illegal under the McCain-Feingold "sham ad" provisions both gentlemen favor—at least as interpreted by the court whose proceedings each cites in Brennan's defense. Me, I would prefer that Schwarz and Krasno be permitted to circulate their sham objections to my work in any forum they might choose, and with anyone's money they might be blessed to waste. But that is an argument for another day. For now, suffice it to say that neither man has raised a single "genuine issue" of substance with anything I've written.

Frederick A.O. Schwarz Jr. suggests that I have concocted a misleadingly narrow-focused "version" of the academic and legal controversy over Brennan's *Buying Time* studies—one that makes far too "much" of the project's self-acknowledged bias in order to cast "baseless" suspicion on its research findings, the "vast majority" of which have been vindicated by the *McConnell* v. *FEC* trial court. As we've already seen, the Brennan Center calculates percentages by methods previously unknown to mathematical science. "Much" seems a bit off the mark to me, and "vast majority" strikes me as perfectly incredible.

In the whole of a 4,700-plus word article, I recall including just two small paragraphs on *Buying Time*'s partisan motivations, largely consisting of verbatim quotations from subpoenaed Brennan Center documents and deposition testimony. I also recall quite carefully pointing out that Judge Leon, more generously disposed to Brennan than his two colleagues, was indeed prepared, as he explained in his May 2 opinion, to accord *Buying Time* "some" evidentiary weight. He did so, however, for reasons I further pointed out—reasons Schwarz understandably neglects to mention: Properly reanalyzed, Leon thought, *Buying Time*, its ostensible "findings" to the contrary notwithstanding, actually helped establish that the original McCain-Feingold "sham ad" provision was constitutionally "defective."

Alert readers will already have noted that Schwarz's invocation of Judge Kollar-Kotelly is irrelevant to the dispute at hand. That she agrees with him on the evils of unregulated large-dollar donations to political parties speaks to the justice of McCain-Feingold's Title I "soft money" restrictions, but not to anything involving the Brennan Center's research. *Buying Time* was intended to provide a constitutional rationale for McCain-Feingold's Title II advertising restrictions. In that context, Kollar-Kotelly, as accurately recounted in my piece, was unprepared to trust Brennan's conclusions.

No, I do not believe that two-thirds of all late-campaign political commercials are "altogether genuine issue broadcasts," and I have nowhere indicated otherwise. Most late-campaign political commercials—the "vast majority," Frederick A.O. Schwarz might say—are sponsored by candidates and their parties directly. As such, those ads are already regulated, and are subject to no new restrictions by the McCain-Feingold legislation. The new reform law is directed, instead, against corporate, union, and non-profit airtime purchases meeting certain specified content and scheduling criteria. It was this sub-category of TV spots that *Buying Time* purported to study. According to James Gibson, an expert witness for the plaintiffs during the *McConnell* trial, the earliest raw data collected by Brennan's Arizona State University student volunteers indicated that 64 percent of political broadcasts prospectively banned as "sham" by the McCain-Feingold bill would in fact have no detectable campaign-related purpose. That *Buying Time 1998* eventually reported a much lower number—7 percent—was likely, Gibson thought, the product of undisclosed data manipulation.

Krasno, the author of that 7 percent figure, does not specify which of the breathless innuendos in my one-sided parody he finds most irritating, so I am forced to keep panting about all of them, I suppose. But I will throw him a bone: I endorse his request that interested (and unusually obsessive) WEEKLY STANDARD readers make their own extended first-person excursions through the *McConnell* trial record, which is where I got nearly all my material in the first place. Moreover, I concede in advance—never having challenged the point, really—that readers will find in that trial record some confirmation, after a fashion, that Krasno's number "was correct." As detailed in my article, though, the man's competence with a calculator was never the question. The question, instead, was always: 7 percent of what?—and whether the what was an appropriate measure of McCain-Feingold's constitutionality. Krasno's current silence on this matter is eloquent.

• • •

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the weekly Standard

What Wolfowitz Really Said

As this magazine goes to press, a controversy swirls about the head of Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz. He is alleged to have "revealed," in an interview with writer Sam Tanenhaus for the Manhattan celebrity/fashion glossy *Vanity Fair*, that the Bush administration's asserted casus belli for war against Saddam Hussein—the dictator's weapons-of-mass-destruction program—was little more than a propaganda device, a piece of self-conscious and insincere political manipulation.

Lazy reporters have been following the lead of the press release *Vanity Fair* publicists circulated about their "scoop." It begins as follows:

> Contradicting the Bush administration, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz tells *Vanity Fair* that weapons of mass destruction had never been the most compelling justification for invading Iraq.

As it happens, this is a not-quite-accurate description of a paragraph in Tanenhaus's article, which itself bears reprinting for reasons that will become obvious in a moment:

> When we spoke in May, as U.S. inspectors were failing to find weapons of mass destruction, Wolfowitz admitted that from the outset, contrary to so many claims from the White House, Iraq's supposed cache of WMD had never been the most important casus belli. It was simply one of several reasons: "For bureaucratic reasons we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction, because it was the one reason everyone could agree on." *Everyone* meaning, presumably, Powell and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "Almost unnoticed but huge," he said, is another reason: removing Saddam will allow the U.S. to take its troops out of Saudi Arabia, where their presence has been one of al-Qaeda's biggest grievances.

Let's be clear: Though Paul Wolfowitz has friends and admirers at THE WEEKLY STANDARD, we would be surprised and more than a little distressed had he actually said what he's supposed to have said in this instance.

For the last 12 years, all specific and sometimes heated policy disagreements notwithstanding, American presidents of both parties, joining a near-unanimous consensus of the so-called "world community," have agreed that the Baath party regime's persistent and never-fully-disclosed WMD program represented a grave threat to international security. Al Gore, for example, in his much-hyped antiwar speech last September, acknowledged that "Iraq's search for weapons of mass destruction has proven impossible to completely deter and we should assume that it will continue for as long as Saddam is in power. We know he has stored secret supplies of biological and chemical weapons throughout his country." The notion that the Bush administration's prewar reiteration of this view was a cynical ploy is crackpot.

For that matter, the notion that the Bush administration *really*, *really*, in its heart of hearts, had other, preferred reasons for taking out Saddam Hussein—particularly, that it did so to justify removing its troops from Saudi Arabia—and that the entire war was therefore a fraud . . . well, this idea, too, is crackpot.

What gives with this *Vanity Fair* interview, then?

What gives is that Tanenhaus has mischaracterized Wolfowitz's remarks, that *Vanity Fair*'s publicists have mischaracterized Tanenhaus's mischaracterization, and that Bush administration critics are now indulging in an orgy of righteous indignation that is dishonest in triplicate.

Pentagon staffers were wise enough to tape-record the Tanenhaus-Wolfowitz interview. Prior to publication of the *Vanity Fair* piece, they made that transcript available to its author. And they have since posted the transcript on the Defense Department's website (*www.defenselink.mil*). Tanenhaus's assertion that Wolfowitz "admitted" that "Iraq's WMD had never been the most important casus belli" turns out to be, not to put too fine a point on it, false. Here's the relevant section of the conversation:

> TANENHAUS: Was that one of the arguments that was raised early on by you and others that Iraq actually does connect, not to connect the dots too much, but the relationship between Saudi Arabia, our troops being there, and bin Laden's rage about that, which he's built on so many years, also connects the World Trade Center attacks, that there's a logic of motive or something like that? Or does that read too much into—
>
> WOLFOWITZ: No, I think it happens to be correct. The truth is that for reasons that have a lot to do with the U.S. government bureaucracy we settled on the one issue that everyone could agree on which was weapons of mass destruc-

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tion as the core reason, but . . . there have always been three fundamental concerns. One is weapons of mass destruction, the second is support for terrorism, the third is the criminal treatment of the Iraqi people. Actually I guess you could say there's a fourth overriding one which is the connection between the first two. . . . The third one by itself, as I think I said earlier, is a reason to help the Iraqis but it's not a reason to put American kids' lives at risk, certainly not on the scale we did it. That second issue about links to terrorism is the one about which there's the most disagreement within the bureaucracy, even though I think everyone agrees that we killed 100 or so of an al Qaeda group in northern Iraq in this recent go-around, that we've arrested that al Qaeda guy in Baghdad who was connected to this guy Zarqawi whom Powell spoke about in his U.N. presentation.

In short, Wolfowitz made the perfectly sensible observation that more than just WMD was of concern, but that among several serious reasons for war, WMD was the issue about which there was widest domestic (and international) agreement.

As for Tanenhaus's suggestion that Wolfowitz somehow fessed up that the war had a hidden, "unnoticed but huge" agenda—rationalizing a pre-planned troop withdrawal from Saudi Arabia—we refer you, again, to the actual interview. In an earlier section of the conversation, concerning the current, postwar situation in the Middle East, Wolfowitz explained that the United States needs to get post-Saddam Iraq "right," and that we also need "to get some progress on the Israeli-Palestinian issue," which now looks more promising. Then Wolfowitz said this:

There are a lot of things that are different now, and one that has gone by almost unnoticed—but it's huge—is that by complete mutual agreement between the U.S. and the Saudi government we can now remove almost all of our forces from Saudi Arabia. Their presence there over the last 12 years has been a source of enormous difficulty for a friendly government.... I think just lifting that burden from the Saudis is itself going to open the door to other positive things.

Tanenhaus has taken a straightforward and conventional observation about strategic arrangements in a post-Saddam Middle East and juiced it up into a vaguely sinister "admission" about America's motives for going to war in the first place.

The failure so far to discover "stocks" of WMD material in post-Saddam Iraq raises legitimate questions about the quality of U.S. and allied intelligence—though no one doubts that Saddam's regime had weapons of mass destruction, used weapons of mass destruction, and had an ongoing program to develop more such weapons. Furthermore, people of good will are entitled to disagree, even in retrospect, about the wisdom and probable effects of Saddam's forcible removal. But distorting an on-the-record interview with a Bush administration official in order to create a quasi-conspiratorial narrative of deceit and deception at the highest levels of the U.S. government is a disgrace.

—*William Kristol*

Color Us Neutral

While the nation awaits the Supreme Court's rulings in the Michigan affirmative action cases, the Bush administration has launched an effort designed to stimulate interest in race-neutral means of enhancing educational opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities. The project has proceeded quietly, with the Education Department taking the lead. One must hope that the Court's decisions in the Michigan cases won't cut short this important initiative.

It began in March when the Education Department's Office for Civil Rights issued "Race-Neutral Alternatives in Postsecondary Education: Innovative Approaches to Diversity." The publication provides information on the various race-neutral programs that are being implemented around the country, without endorsing any particular one, the point being to make them more widely known and to encourage educators to consider them seriously, even to come up with new ones of their own.

In late April, the Office for Civil Rights followed up with a two-day conference in Miami attended by representatives of more than 100 colleges and universities, including Brown, Penn, Notre Dame, Baylor, Virginia Tech, Brigham Young, and Southern Methodist. Since then the office has continued to collect and distribute information on race-neutral alternatives.

The result has been to broaden discussion of this subject beyond where the Justice Department left it in its Michigan briefs. At issue in those cases are the undergraduate and law schools' race-based admissions policies. In arguing that the Constitution forbids "race-based policies when race-neutral alternatives are available," the Justice Department gave as examples of the latter the policies used by Texas, California, and Florida that guarantee admission to the highest-ranked students in each high

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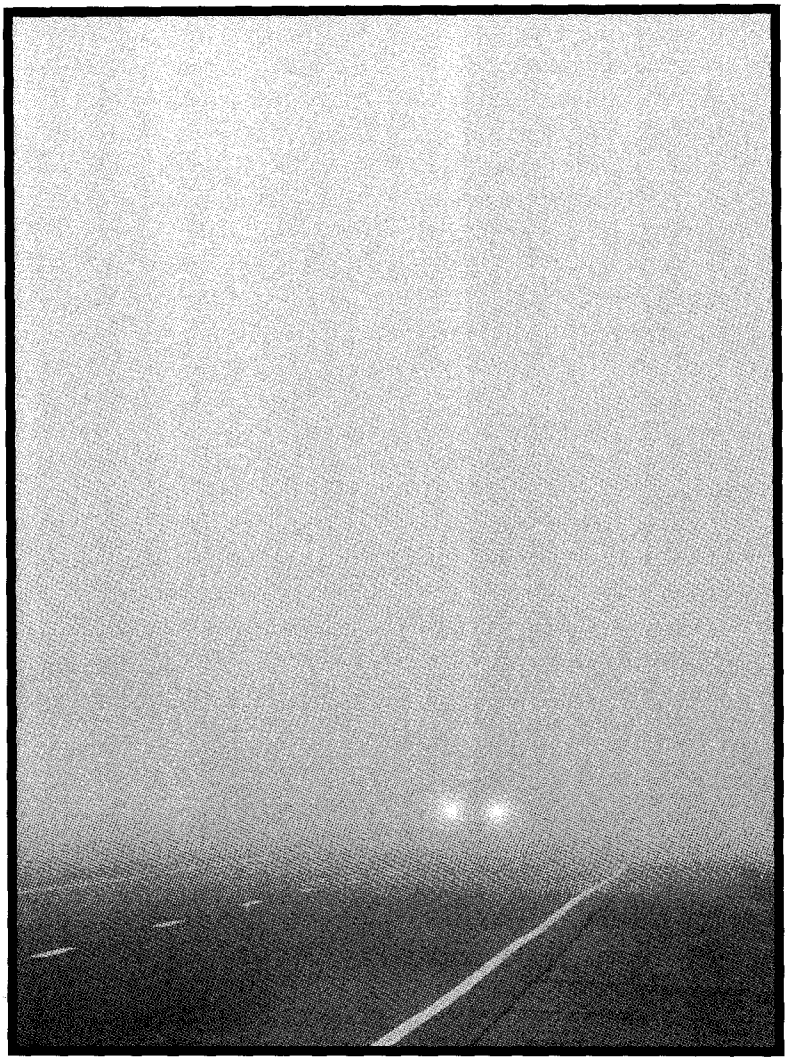
Investment capital and the uncertainty principle.



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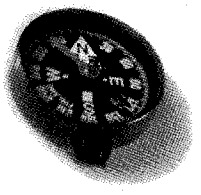

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school graduating class—the top 10 percent in Texas, the top 4 percent in California, and the top 20 percent in Florida.

Those policies—and their results so far—are spelled out in "Race-Neutral Alternatives in Postsecondary Education," and representatives of the three states discussed them in Miami. But the Office for Civil Rights is also publicizing socioeconomic affirmative action, which Texas, California, and Florida are using on a limited basis. Under this approach, as Richard Kahlenberg, author of *The Remedy: Class, Race, and Affirmative Action*, explained during the conference, preferences are extended to students who have performed well academically despite having faced various social and economic obstacles. In determining socioeconomic disadvantage, admissions officers take into account, among other factors, parents' education, family income, family structure, and school quality.

Both the class-rank and socioeconomic approaches operate at the point where students seek admission. Yet it is widely recognized that many students need help much earlier in their schooling if they are to have the skills, resources, and abilities actually to compete for places in good colleges—and then succeed.

For this reason, the Office for Civil Rights is also drawing attention to "developmental" approaches—such as "partnerships" in which universities work with nearby low-performing elementary and secondary schools. The University of California, the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Vermont, and the University of Florida have partnerships with such schools. The partnerships take various forms, depending on the need. In some cases, the universities tutor and mentor students, and advise them about the courses they need to take to prepare for college. In other cases, they help schools devise curricula, train teachers, or even provide classroom instruction.

Another developmental approach involves the expansion of Advanced Placement courses. As "Race-Neutral Alternatives" points out, taking AP courses helps high school students in at least three ways: They may learn more because they are in more demanding courses; they may get higher GPAs as a result of taking AP courses, which sometimes carry extra points; and they may earn college credits. Unfortunately, many inner-city and rural high schools, if they offer AP courses at all, offer fewer than other high schools do. Texas and Florida have undertaken to change that, and the results so far are impressive. In Texas, student participation in AP courses has climbed by 57 percent since 1999, with most of the increase coming from schools that had never before offered such courses. And in Florida, the number of students in low-performing schools who are taking AP courses has increased from 4,000 to 7,000 in the past two years.

It's hard not to notice that most of the race-neutral alternatives the Department of Education is publicizing are found in Texas, California, and Florida. There is a reason for that: Those states were forced to abandon racial preferences—which meant, if they were to pursue diversity, they had to do so by race-neutral means. A court (the federal appeals court for the 5th Circuit) told Texas to quit using racial preferences. A majority of the people in California (voting for Proposition 209) told California to use them no more. And a savvy governor (Jeb Bush) employed an executive order to tell Florida that the era of racial preferences was over.

Education officials clearly believe that race-neutral approaches will eventually yield racial and ethnic diversity—meaning an integrated student body. The department doesn't contend, however, that this integration must be defined numerically. The Office for Civil Rights thus parts company with Michigan and other schools using race-based policies that require a "critical mass" of underrepresented students in a class if the educational benefits of diversity are to be secured. For Michigan, the chief educational benefit is supposed to be a transformation of the attitudes of all students, especially those in the majority. "Race-Neutral Alternatives" doesn't critique that idea of diversity—which is vigorously disputed in the Michigan litigation. Both Justice and Education have shied away from the issue, no doubt because President Bush has at times seemed to support diversity as a tool of social engineering. So a still broader conversation on diversity has been left for others to join. Soon enough, we'll know whether the Supreme Court has engaged it.

"Race-Neutral Alternatives" correctly notes that "any race-neutral program is unlikely to produce racial diversity with the precision that using race will"—meaning the precision achieved by a critical-mass quota. And some race-neutral alternatives have drawn criticism on grounds that they aren't really race-neutral. Class-rank and percentage plans in particular are said to be constitutionally dubious. They use race-neutral criteria, goes the argument, yet those criteria were chosen in order to favor certain groups—and disfavor others. But wherever one comes down on that issue, the class-rank plans at least have the merit of not treating individuals differently on account of their race.

The conversation the Education Department has begun is worth having precisely because it is past time that colleges and universities stopped treating applicants in a racially discriminatory manner. "We've spent a lot of time defining the present [preferential] system," said Gerald Reynolds, the assistant secretary for civil rights, during the Miami conference. "Why can't we spend time on this?" The nation will be able to spend a lot more time on race-neutral alternatives if the Court renders—as it should—an unambiguous judgment against racial preferences.

—Terry Eastland, for the Editors

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Continental Divide

America needs a serious Europe policy.

BY MAX BOOT

Brussels

A VISITOR TO NATO headquarters can be forgiven some momentary disorientation. Braced for NATO's rumored imminent demise, he is met instead with boasts of its Jack La Lanne-like vigor.

Today's euphoria results from several developments—above all, the agreement between the United States, France, Germany, and Russia that resulted in the Security Council's lifting sanctions on Iraq and giving a U.N. imprimatur to the Anglo-American occupation. This is seen as ending the prewar rift that reached a crisis point over France and Germany's initial refusal to aid Turkey. Less noticed is the agreement by the North Atlantic Council to assume peacekeeping duties in Kabul and to provide logistical and planning support that will enable Poland to manage a sector of occupied Iraq.

NATO officials are so giddy over how well things are going that they openly speculate about new missions—perhaps even policing an accord between Israelis and Palestinians. The Group of Eight summit in Evian, France, is designed to showcase the transatlantic reconciliation.

Alas, this era of good feeling is unlikely to last. The gaps in capabilities and perceptions between the Europeans and Americans remain vast and daunting.

The United States, which spends more on defense than the rest of NATO combined, has long importuned its allies to carry their own weight. But the Continent's anemic economic performance, soaring budget deficits, and aging populations make a major reversal unlikely. So does Europe's distinctive perception of the world. The Europeans still don't understand how deeply 9/11 has changed our outlook. They are not exactly oblivious to the danger—they have provided good cooperation on law enforcement operations against terrorism—but they still place their faith in international law over military action, engagement over confrontation. Suspicions of American "unilateralism" run deep on a continent where the most widely read commentator on U.S. foreign policy appears to be Noam Chomsky.

Much as French and German officials may try to be more diplomatic and constructive since the Iraq war, their sullenness emerges. Dominique de Villepin, France's Napoleonic foreign minister, maintains that only the anti-Iraq war views of Pope John Paul II and President Jacques Chirac saved the world from a cataclysmic "clash of civilizations." He makes no secret of his desire to see the European Union balance the American "hyperpower." Indeed the leaders of Belgium, France, Germany, and Luxembourg recently met to discuss the creation of an E.U. military force entirely separate from NATO.

It's easy to dismiss such posturing with a French joke. (But be warned—French officials think they are the victims of intolerable ethnic slurs, akin to anti-Semitism, from *les anglo-saxons*!) And, luckily, French highhandedness rankles fellow Europeans too. But Chirac and de Villepin are convinced that they speak with the true voice of Europe—and based on public opinion polls, they may be right.

The recent Iraq war was wildly unpopular even in the 18 European nations whose governments basically supported the U.S. position. There is a good chance that pro-American governments will fall in Spain, Italy, and elsewhere. In France, no major party offers an alternative to the regnant Gaullism. In Germany, it is striking that the Christian Democratic Union, formerly the most pro-American of parties, did little to challenge Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, a Social Democrat, while he thumbed his nose at Uncle Sam.

We can't necessarily count on nationalist rivalries to stymie the Paris-Berlin axis in the future, because national polities will count for less and less as the European Union becomes increasingly centralized. While Americans are focused on more important matters like the NBA finals and the opening of *The Matrix Reloaded*, a European constitutional convention is completing its work. The principal drafter of the new basic law is former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and his work is unlikely to warm the heart of anyone who doesn't eat snails.

One of Giscard's ambitions, in line with longtime French foreign policy, is to increase the likelihood that Europe will speak with "one voice" in foreign and defense policy. Whether that's good or bad from an American perspective depends on what the voice says. The optimistic line is that Gaullism will be stifled in a new, expanded European Union, with Poland, Spain, Britain, and other states combining to form a solidly pro-American bloc. This view holds, essentially, that Europe will be Anglicized. The pessimistic alternative is that greater E.U. integration will turn the entire continent into a Francophone zone. The fear here is that Britain, with its traditional

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ambivalence toward the continent, will never emerge as the leader of Europe. Instead, Germany and France will muscle the smaller states into line.

In light of recent experience, this may seem unlikely; the Poles, Czechs, and other easterners were outraged—not chastened—when Chirac snarled that they had missed a good chance to shut up during the Iraq crisis. But, from a French perspective, this merely shows that the socialization of the unruly easterners is only just beginning. "The new countries will learn how to be part of the club," a senior French official said, rather ominously, to some visitors from *les Etats-Unis*.

It would be a mistake to dismiss this as a French fantasy. Eastern European gratitude to, and affection for, America is sure to fade with the passage of time, as Western European gratitude already has. The easterners are dependent economically on Germany, and that relationship will deepen. They will not jeopardize vital economic ties over peripheral policy disputes. Such economic links may also draw Russia into the E.U.'s orbit.

AFP / Anja Niedringhaus

British paratrooper in Kabul: Europeans are shouldering the bulk of peacekeeping there.

There is still little chance that the E.U. will ever realize French ambitions of "balancing" America, since Europe is in long-term decline, economically, militarily, and demographically, while the United States continues to grow. The real danger is not that the E.U. will become a global political giant (to match its economic stature). It is that a lowest-common-denominator foreign policy directed by Brussels bureaucrats will rob the United States of the support of its closest allies—even Britain.

Given America's vast power, this would not be catastrophic. As Donald Rumsfeld indelicately pointed out, we could have beaten Saddam Hussein without British help. But would we have gone to war at all if Tony Blair had not stood with George W. Bush? Maybe so, but it would have been much harder to rally support from the public and Congress if the only allies we'd been able to muster had been Micronesia and Eritrea. Europe matters in another way too: It helps shoulder the peacekeeping burden. Already Europeans are carrying the bulk of the load in Bosnia, Kosovo, and Kabul, and if a humanitarian intervention occurs in the Congo it likely will be a Europe-only affair.

This is not meant to suggest that Europe matters as much as it did in the past—or as much as it still does in the minds of many self-absorbed Europeans. But neither is Europe irrelevant, as some jingoistic Americans like to imagine. For that reason, the anti-American drift of the E.U. is cause for concern. At a minimum, it should lead Washington to rethink its traditional enthusiasm for greater European integration. Much as British entry into the euro zone might make life easier for American businesses (and tourists), it is sure to make life more difficult for American diplomats.

Open American opposition to the European Union would probably backfire, but it makes sense to work behind the scenes to strengthen U.S. links with close allies and to forestall as much as possible the centralization of European security policy. Giving Poland its own sector in Iraq was a brilliant move that boosted "new Europe" without giving the appearance that it was motivated by hostility to "old Europe." Instead of wasting time turning French fries into "freedom fries," we need more such ideas that will cleverly promote U.S. interests without annoying a European public that already is suspicious of American motives. ♦

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Not Your Grandma's YWCA

A Christian organization in name only.

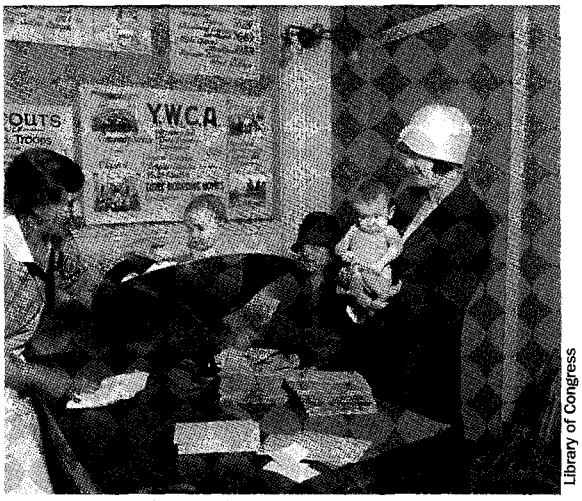
BY CHRISTINE ROSEN

IN MID-MAY, Patricia Ireland, former president of the National Organization for Women, assumed her new position as CEO of the Young Women's Christian Association. A small flurry of protests ensued, led by pro-family and conservative groups who charged that Ireland—an avowedly secular liberal and bisexual—was hardly fit to lead a Christian organization. But a glance at the recent history of the YWCA suggests that Ireland's appointment is less a departure than it is the culmination of a decades-long migration away from the YWCA's mainstream Protestant roots.

Many people think the YWCA's principal purpose is to manage gyms and swimming pools. In fact, the organization has always done advocacy work, reflecting its origins in the 19th-century Christian social service movement. The YWCA began in 1860 as a boardinghouse for working women in New York City; by 1900 there were Ys in over 100 cities.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, local chapters joined with other social service organizations to lobby for reforms designed to protect women and children. But since the 1960s, its advocacy has taken an increasingly liberal turn. Influenced by second-wave feminist activism, representatives of the Y were present at the founding of the National Abortion Rights Action League in the late 1960s, and the group vigorously supported the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution in the 1970s.

Today, the YWCA is in the midst of a multi-year reassessment. With nearly 70 percent of local chapters operating at a deficit and participation among the young at an all-time low, according to *Advertising Age*, its leaders have streamlined their national board and redefined their priorities. "Our mission is to empower women and girls and to eliminate racism," says the current statement of purpose, " . . . in order to attain a common vision: peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all people."



Library of Congress

Baby-weighing at the Denver YWCA in the 1920s

Another change was the decision to relocate the headquarters. "We moved the national office to Washington [this spring] to be closer to the Hill," says Audrey Peeples, chair of the organization's national coordinating board. "Are we doing this to usher in a new era of advocacy for the organization? Absolutely," she says. "And Ireland had such a wonderful record at NOW."

Advocacy, for the new Y, means promoting the standard feminist agenda: opposition to any restriction on abortion including parental notification, support for affirmative action across the board, and vigorous defense of Title IX requirements for college athletics. For good measure, the YWCA issued a statement denouncing the war in Iraq. Every year the organization joins forces with Lifetime Television for Women to decry "gun violence, violence linked to racism and bigotry, and violence in the media."

It turns out, then, that Patricia Ireland is a natural to head the new YWCA, an outfit whose rhetoric is indistinguishable from that of feminist groups such as the National Organization for Women and the Feminist Majority Foundation.

One matter of organizational identity, however, remains in the balance: whether the Y will retain any token Christian affiliation. Partly to help settle this matter, the group recently hired Landor Associates, a consulting firm, to lead a major "rebranding" effort.

"I'm not the head of a Christian organization," Ireland told the *New York Times* soon after her appointment, "I'm the head of a social justice women's organization." Would the YWCA consider dropping "Christian" from its name? "That's what this branding effort will tell us," says Peeples. "Landor Associates is conducting focus groups and we'll go where the path leads us."

Whatever Landor recommends, a fundamental change of direction has already taken place. Historically, the YWCA's mission was firmly grounded in biblical morality. The Y mobilized volunteers who acted as surrogate parents for young women living away from home. Local chapters sponsored Bible studies and prayer

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groups as well as job training. In the 1890s, the Boston YWCA described its purpose as the careful tending of "the temporal, moral, and religious welfare of young women who are dependent on their own exertions for support."

To the growing ranks of girls working in factories, the YWCA offered respectable lodgings and opportunities to socialize. In the 1890s, YWCA chapters lobbied state lawmakers to raise the age of consent. During World War I, they deployed female physicians to communities near the Army's domestic training camps. Their mission? To "emphasize the responsibility of women and girls for right social standards" when they came into contact with male military recruits.

Today, the YWCA's website goes so far as to note that the founders of the organization "had a religiously based concern for the worth of all individuals." Mostly, though, the website expresses a vision of social justice unmoored from biblical injunctions and inhospitable to all but the politically correct. Interestingly, the parallel organization for males—the Young Men's Christian Association—has hewed more closely to its original mission. Its stated goal remains "To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all." The YMCA's advocacy is nonpartisan, and its activities include child care, healthy living, and character development programs.

Once, the YWCA sought to make a practical and moral difference in the lives of women; it did so in large part by pursuing an ideal of Christian service. By effectively severing its links to its Christian past—and taking for its leader a master of professional querulousness and victim politics—the new YWCA has chosen to blend still further into the crowded field of secular liberal advocacy groups. An expert face-lift may or may not succeed in revitalizing the YWCA's "brand," but it certainly won't save its soul. ♦

The Less than Almighty Dollar

What's behind the Bush economic strategy.

BY DAVID HALE

ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL principles of American political economy during the second half of the 20th century was that Treasury secretaries from New York always produced rallies in the value of the dollar, while Treasury secretaries from Texas produced devaluations.

This geographic bias was not an accident. It reflected ancient divisions in American history extending back to the gold standard era of the late 19th century. In that period, the western states supported populist candidates who opposed the gold standard and favored dollar devaluation to bolster commodity prices. The eastern states were dominated by financial conservatives who favored sound money and protecting America's good name in the global capital market (London) through the gold standard.

In the modern era, the big advocates of a soft dollar were Texans John Connally, James Baker, and Lloyd Bentsen. Connally actually introduced the era of floating exchange rates, with the Nixon administration's 1971 severing of the dollar's longstanding link to gold. Baker organized a large dollar devaluation at a 1985 G-7 summit at the Plaza Hotel in New York in order to reduce the country's burgeoning trade deficit and constrain protectionist forces in Congress. Bentsen, in turn, advocated a soft dollar in order to boost U.S. exports.

When George W. Bush became president in 2001, it was unclear if he would align himself with the Texas or New York tradition in exchange rate policy. As an industrialist from Pittsburgh, Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill appeared to be susceptible to the desires of manufacturing companies for a cheap currency to increase sales abroad, but the president's chief economic adviser, Larry Lindsey, was aligned with the New York financial community and advocated a strong dollar. Lindsey resigned from the White House in December and left behind a vacuum on the issue of exchange rate policy. The new Treasury secretary, John Snow, has filled it by aligning himself with the Texas tradition. At the G-8 finance ministers' meeting in France last week, he publicly abandoned the strong dollar policy bequeathed by the East Coast Clinton Treasury secretaries, Robert Rubin and Lawrence Summers.

It is unclear why Snow decided to pursue such a high-risk strategy. As the dollar has been declining for over a year, he may have decided that he should simply accept the market's verdict rather than continuing to pay homage to the idea of a strong currency. He may also have been encouraged to accept a weak-dollar policy because of the financial market's new obsession with the risk of deflation. The Federal Reserve has publicly admitted that deflation is a risk, and bond yields have fallen to a 45-year low despite the weakness of the dollar. If deflation is a possibility, the dollar's decline would pose far fewer risks than in the past.

It is also possible that Snow decided to accept a weak dollar because it is actually a byproduct of the administration's own policies. While the dollar has been falling at an erratic

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pace for over a year, its decline accelerated this spring for three reasons.

First, the markets are concerned that the Bush administration's fiscal policy could boost the federal budget deficit to $400-500 billion. As Americans are not big savers, this increases U.S. dependence on foreign investors. Yet capital flows to the United States have declined in recent months. Thus, we will have to see a correction in either the currency or domestic asset markets.

Second, the markets are alarmed that the United States is embarking on an imperialist foreign policy that will have unknown economic consequences. In the heyday of empire, Great Britain was an exporter of capital. There is no precedent for a country playing the role of global superpower, while essentially financed by foreign investors. During the Cold War, Washington was able to finance its defense spending in part through offset programs with other countries. The Bundesbank, for example, stockpiled dollars as a quid pro quo for U.S. defense spending in Germany. During the 1991 Gulf War, the United States received large subsidies from Japan, Saudi Arabia, and other countries. With Washington pursuing a more unilateralist foreign policy, it will have to absorb more of the costs without help from traditional allies.

Finally, the markets perceive a vacuum at the center of U.S. economic policy-making. In this administration power is centralized at the White House. The only highly visible cabinet ministers are at the departments of State and Defense. The Treasury's stature and influence declined steadily during the tenure of Paul O'Neill because of his caustic comments about many issues and poor relationship with Congress. John Snow has worked hard to improve ties with Congress, but the markets perceive him to be a salesman, not an architect, of policy.

The people who actually created the administration's economic policy, Larry Lindsey and Glenn Hubbard, have resigned. The other institutions of economic policy are also weak. The new director of the National Economic Policy Council is focused on internal administration rather than influencing markets. Mitch Daniels, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, has resigned to pursue a political career in Indiana. The Council of Economic Advisers is being evicted from the White House. The Bush administration's economic policy appears to be under the control of White House political advisers, not the traditional institutions of government. In fact, the White House would probably not be able to encourage a dollar rally unless Karl Rove held a press conference on the subject. During the Clinton administration, by contrast, the dollar benefited from the perception that there was a strong Treasury secretary who commanded the confidence of the president and understood the risks of a falling currency.

The White House would probably not be able to encourage a dollar rally unless Karl Rove held a press conference on the subject.

The decision last week of the White House to appoint Joshua Bolten as director of OMB could help to fill some of the new institutional vacuum. Bolten has had a close relationship with the president for many years and could emerge as a new Richard Darman. In the first Bush administration, Darman ran economic policy from the OMB, not the Treasury. But as Bolten is less aggressive and egotistical than Darman, it is not yet clear if he will attempt to dominate every issue.

As Snow's recent comments have made clear, Washington will do nothing to stabilize the dollar until there

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is a major correction in bond prices that might jeopardize the boom in the housing market. Foreigners own financial assets equal to 75 percent of American economic output, so they could produce a major decline in bond prices if they suddenly decided to withdraw. But in the absence of a threat to the American housing market, the burden of adjustment to the falling dollar will fall upon other countries. Asia will resist dollar depreciation through large-scale market intervention. China's foreign exchange reserves will expand from $280 billion to $330 billion this year. Japan's reserves will mushroom from $500 billion to $600 billion this year and reach $1 trillion by 2008. Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong will also continue to accumulate dollar reserves.

If Asia is able to stabilize its exchange rates, the United States will have to devalue against other currencies. This pressure for devaluation will set in motion a process of competitive monetary reflation with the euro zone, Britain, Canada, Australia, South Africa, and other countries with variable exchange rates. These countries will be compelled to cut interest rates to prevent their currencies from appreciating against the dollar.

The Bush administration is prepared to pursue aggressive fiscal and monetary policies in order to insure a healthy recovery during the run-up to the 2004 presidential election. Its new weak dollar policy is designed to put pressure on other countries to reinforce this domestic growth agenda. During the late 1980s Japan created a bubble economy with skyrocketing prices for land equities by pursuing a monetary policy designed to stabilize the dollar. The coming round of competitive monetary reflation is also likely to force central banks to pursue far more aggressive interest rate cuts than they currently anticipate. If it happens, George W. Bush will not only win reelection next year. There could be Bush bubbles in many asset markets during late 2004 and 2005. ♦

America Loses Its Voice

The war of ideas is lagging.

BY JOSHUA MURAVCHIK

IN LAYING OUT HIS BATTLE PLAN for the war against terrorism in his National Security Strategy issued last September, President Bush emphasized two key elements, military force and waging "a war of ideas." The second is less tangible than the first, but no less important. Our victory in the Cold War owed at least as much to our ideological arsenal as to our military deterrent. The war on terror, in contrast, has thus far been one-dimensional. Our military efforts have been prodigious, but our work in the realm of ideas has been negligible.

The need for some kind of campaign for "hearts and minds" could scarcely be more obvious. Never has the United States confronted so much hostility and distrust. A Gallup poll conducted in Muslim countries a few months after the attacks of 9/11 showed that in Kuwait, only 11 percent said they had a "very favorable" opinion of our country, while more than twice as many, 23 percent, said they had a "very *un*favorable" one. In Saudi Arabia, only 7 percent were very favorable, while 49 percent were very unfavorable. And in the case of Pakistan, Gallup was reduced to putting an asterisk next to "very favorable," meaning a percentage too low to measure. These results came before the war in Iraq, which is unlikely to have boosted our standing.

Nor is the problem limited to the Islamic world. According to a Pew poll this March, only 6 percent of the French said their opinion of the United States was very favorable, while 22 percent said theirs was very unfavorable. The numbers were even worse in Germany (4 percent to 30 percent) and in Spain (3 percent to 39 percent). Even among the British, our stalwart friends, only 14 percent said they had a very favorable opinion of us, while 16 percent said the opposite. And in Turkey, which is both Muslim and European, those in the "very unfavorable" camp dwarfed their "very favorable" brethren by a whopping 67 percent to 3 percent.

We are doing little about this. Why? Because in the 1990s we unilaterally disarmed ourselves of the weapons of ideological warfare. In the early days of the Cold War, much of this arsenal reposed with the CIA, which created Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, underwrote the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and sustained the efforts of anti-Communists of many stripes in the realm of politics and culture. While such covert activities eventually became controversial, there is ample evidence that many of them were effective. After exposés drove the CIA from this field, some other agencies found ways to accomplish similar goals. The National Endowment for Democracy, for example, gives to democratic groups abroad overt support of a kind that might have been furnished covertly in an earlier day. The principal burden of cultivating good will toward America among publics overseas was left to the U.S. Information Agency. Once the Cold War was won, USIA funding was

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slashed repeatedly, as conservative isolationists and budget hawks teamed up with liberal cultural relativists averse to American "propaganda." The coup de grace came when Jesse Helms, taking his cue from Secretary of State Warren Christopher, persuaded the Senate to abolish USIA, folding its functions into the State Department, which was, however, more eager to absorb the agency's resources than to carry forward its mission.

Since 9/11, lacking an agency or office equipped to prosecute a war of ideas, we have been flailing. An advertising executive was brought in as an undersecretary of state for public diplomacy in order to, in Secretary Powell's words, "rebrand America," just as she had done for Uncle Ben's rice. As a start, she organized a campaign publicizing the "mosques of America," apparently to make the Muslim world aware of how many Americans practice Islam. Of course, a far greater number of Americans practice Christianity, yet it has done nothing for our standing with the French, Spaniards, and Germans.

Meanwhile, the Broadcasting Board of Governors launched "Radio Sawa," which aims to attract a large, youthful audience in the Arab world by broadcasting pop music, with only brief interruptions for news and occasional interviews.

The war of ideas, however, cannot be won by seduction. It must be primarily a work of persuasion. Of course heavy-handed propaganda is useless, and in the Cold War the Voice of America used jazz to draw listeners. But our approach today is out of balance. When Sawa was launched, the Arabic service of Voice of America was abolished, with the inexplicable result that we are today broadcasting less news, commentary, and discourse to the Arab world than at any time in memory.

The agenda of persuasion should contain three objectives. The first is to anathematize terrorism, which is still widely accepted in the Islamic world. In the wake of 9/11, Kofi Annan was forced to abandon a draft treaty against terrorism because the Islamic Conference insisted that it contain an exception for terrorism on behalf of worthy causes. And, according to Gallup, more people in Muslim countries found the 9/11 attacks somewhat justifiable than found them completely unjustifiable.

The second objective is to strengthen those Muslims, from the secular to the most devout, who share Iraqi writer Kanan Makiya's view that "the substitution of jihad for worship" is a "travesty" of Islam. We need to give them platforms and encouragement and material support wherever they feel they can accept it without compromising their message.

Third, we must carry out a campaign of explanation aimed at Europe and the rest of the world about our view of the uses of American power. Rarely has one power been so little balanced by others. No wonder the rest are uneasy. To allay their concerns, we must say much more about how we intend to use our power and the limits we accept.

Addressing this agenda will require new resources. Funding for the war of ideas should be restored to Cold War levels, which would still amount to a pittance compared with military expenditures. We also need to develop a new cadre of spokesmen and activists both within the government and outside. Our greatest asset in the Cold War were ex-Communists like intellectuals Arthur Koestler and Sidney Hook, who could best the Communists in the world of letters, and laborites like Jay Lovestone and Irving Brown, who could battle them in the political trenches. Alas, there is no comparable group of ex-Islamists; but there are eloquent Muslims who are pro-American and pro-democracy with and through whom we can work.

Finally, we need to reinvent USIA. The State Department, whose vocation is the soft sell, is unsuited to the task. As much as we need the Pentagon, we need an agency dedicated to the mission of waging the war of ideas. ♦

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Reagan in 1983: It's time to bring back the Cold War approach to public diplomacy.

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Severe Acute Tyranny Syndrome

Beijing tightens the vise on Hong Kong.

BY ELLEN BORK

IN A FEW WEEKS, China will further extend its control over Hong Kong. Laws on subversion, treason, and sedition, among others, will be enacted by the partially elected legislature, whose anti-democratic members hold the majority under the Beijing-drafted constitution known as the Basic Law. Indeed, enactment of the national security measures is required by Article 23 of the Basic Law. It is part and parcel of China's clever Hong Kong strategy: Create a veneer of legality by adopting elaborate procedures and institutional arrangements, and the international community will stand aside.

That is exactly what the United States has done. The only country with enough clout to contest the slow but steady tightening of Beijing's grip, the United States has failed to make an issue of the national security laws, as it has of many other bad developments since the 1997 handover of Hong Kong from Britain to China. Most recently, the top U.S. official in Hong Kong, Consul General James Keith, said that "decisions on Article 23 legislation are something for Hong Kong people to make," glossing over the fact that Hong Kong's people do not get to make these decisions.

To be fair, Keith's disingenuousness is official policy. Since before the handover, Washington has maintained that everything in Hong Kong is going well. That's true only if you are a Chinese official. China picks the chief executive. China's proxies in the legislature block the elected democrats, for example, from preventing a rollback of democratic practices in local government. When necessary, China, invited by its proxies, steps in to interfere with the Hong Kong judiciary, although the courts were promised independence.

All of this was foreseeable as early as 1984, when the deal between China and Great Britain was done. Deng Xiaoping had made clear that the mainland's interpretation of "one country, two systems" was entirely different from the West's. But Washington preferred to remain neutral about China's plans for Hong Kong's so-called autonomy. As assistant secretary of state Winston Lord told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1996, the United States was not entitled to judge whether China's treatment of Hong Kong conformed to its promises. "The United States," said Lord, "does not offer legal interpretations of agreements to which it is not a party."

But this was an abdication. Under U.S. law, the State Department is required to report on how China lives up to its promises to leave Hong Kong alone, and the president is charged with determining whether Hong Kong is sufficiently autonomous to merit its separate treatment under U.S. law in such matters as export controls.

But enough talk of legality. Hong Kong's new national security laws will be enforced not openly, as in a democratic system, but indirectly, by an arbitrary and repressive regime that locks up its own democratic activists and regards Hong Kong as a base for subversion of the mainland.

For many years now, the United States has swallowed every infringement of freedom and democracy in Hong Kong, finding each one justified under China's constitutional arrangements. Although for years, Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill pushed administrations of both parties to mean what they said about defending Hong Kong's rights and freedoms, even Congress, with few exceptions, has recently fallen silent on the issue.

Yet something can be done. A delegation of democrats from Hong Kong arrives in Washington this week, seeking support for their struggle. Some Hong Kong democrats favor convening a constitutional convention. Of course, China would object. American officials would rather not deal with this either, feeling they have much bigger concerns to manage with Beijing. They should realize, however, that supporting democracy in Hong Kong would strengthen American influence with China, not to mention helping mainland democracy activists, who, unlike those in Hong Kong, serve long prison terms.

For the record, deputy State Department spokesman Philip T. Reeker affirmed last fall that "a democratically elected government, answerable to the will of the people, is the best way to ensure the protection of fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong." So on that much there is agreement.

Hong Kong's people get little attention these days (aside from SARS, which their undemocratic government badly mishandled by imitating Beijing's approach). The pro-democracy delegation—whose members include politicians, a free labor activist, and a representative of the press—deserves the full attention of members of Congress and the Bush administration. That is much less than Hong Kong's people were promised when they were returned to Chinese rule. ♦

Ellen Bork is deputy director of the Project for the New American Century.

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The Mullahs' Manhattan Project

Do we dare let these men acquire nukes?

By Reuel Marc Gerecht

For better or usually for worse, the Islamic Republic of Iran can always command our attention, easily reminding us, as did the wars with Saddam Hussein and September 11, that the Israeli-Palestinian confrontation isn't the cutting edge of modern Middle Eastern history. Clerical Iran's ever-advancing nuclear-weapons program and its fondness for using terrorism as statecraft have made the country the litmus test of President George W. Bush's war on terrorism and his "axis of evil" doctrine.

Neither will end up making much sense unless the Bush administration somehow confronts the Islamic Republic on both issues in a way different from the Clinton administration. After all, the Clintonites tried to staunch the flow of nuclear technology to the Islamic Republic (the rather advanced Natanz gas centrifuge facility near Isfahan and the nearly completed Bushehr nuclear reactor suggest that they failed). But they didn't try at all to hold the Iranians responsible for the 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia. As the former director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation Louis Freeh recently pointed out in an amazing *cri de coeur* in the *Wall Street Journal*, the Clinton White House willfully dragged its counterterrorist feet for fear of damaging what it perceived as a possible fruitful dialogue with Iran's new (1997) "reformist" president, the ever-smiling, Tocqueville-quoting Mohammad Khatami. Khatami would be more likely to triumph over the hard-core clerics, so the theory then went, if the United States didn't aggressively confront Iran for its culpability in killing and maiming dozens of American soldiers. The Clinton administration went for engagement. Khatami neither responded nor seriously confronted his more hard-core clerical brethren on any contentious foreign or domestic issue.

Still the most revolutionary country in the region, Iran has the natural resources, population, geography, culture, and experience with faith-based politics to transform the Muslim Middle East through its successes and failures. A clerical Iran armed with nuclear weaponry might recover some of the dynamism of its early years. The hard-core mullahs' abiding hatred of the United States and its threatening liberal culture could become bolder, fueled by the security of nuclear deterrence and ever-growing anxiety about an "America-inspired" reform movement, which has turned Iran's clerical rulers into dictators in the eyes of most of the country's people.

Reuel Marc Gerecht, a contributing editor, is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

Tehran, June 4, 2001, the 12th anniversary of the death of Khomeini: Rafsanjani is in the center; Khatami is third from the right

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The terrorist reflex in Iran could again start powerfully acting up against the United States, with horrendous results. On the other hand, a democratic Iran, where clerics no longer had dominion, would have an enormous impact on the Middle East. The Islamic revolution would be dead. A secular, democratic alternative would have finally taken root in the heartland of the Muslim world.

An American-born democratic Iraq may well have this capacity too, which is why the Islamic Republic will seek to ensure that a friendly, cleric-driven political system prevails next door. Tehran's ruling mullahs are surely anxious about the increasing discussion in Iran of Iraq's Grand Ayatollah Ali as-Sistani, arguably the most senior Shia cleric in the Muslim world, and the influence of the Iraqi holy city of Najaf, the preeminent center of Shia learning. Sistani's long-held aversion to clerics as politicians is a rebuke to the Islamic Republic's identity. When the grand ayatollah becomes a more public figure, which is inevitable as normality returns to Iraq, and if Najaf follows Sistani's lead, Tehran's ruling mullahs will confront a threat worse than Saddam Hussein.

Clerical circles in Iran are already talking about the tithes flowing from ordinary Iranian believers to Sistani. This is unstoppable in the Shia system, where each Muslim may freely choose his religious guide. That money is undoubtedly given in part because of Sistani's eminence and out of sympathy for the suffering of Shia brethren next door. It is also undoubtedly given in part because Sistani is religiously the exact opposite of the clerics who rule in the Islamic Republic. The Iranian meddling in Iraq is the easiest of America's Iranian problems. The Islamic Republic's quest for nuclear weaponry and its support for terrorism will be much more difficult to solve. In Iraq, the senior Shia clergy will likely do most of our heavy lifting, provided the United States does not hopelessly screw up the administration of the country. Like Afghanistan, Iraq is for us to lose, not for the Iranians to win.

The possible recrudescence of Iranian-supported anti-American terrorism is obviously an immediate concern for Washington. The specter of al Qaeda taking refuge in Iran, and from there waging war against the United States, isn't something, like the attack against Khobar, that can be bureaucratically shuffled by the State Department into our inactive memory. Association with al Qaeda is an inexcusable no-no, even among Washington's most hard-core, trade-loving Republican realpoliticians and conflict-averse liberals and diplomats. Which is, in part, why those who have favored reestablishing some "dialogue" between Washington and Tehran about Iran's nuclear program and its influence in post-Saddam Iraq have uniformly reacted with skepticism toward recent Pentagon and State Department statements about an operationally live al Qaeda presence inside the Islamic Republic.

One Bush administration official, according to the *New York Times*, describes the hawk-dove division on Iran within the U.S. intelligence community. There is disagreement, the official says, about what recent intercepts and "so-called chatter" mean—"whether it represents a link to the Saudi bombings or to the Iranian regime." (Which provokes the question: If the intercepts are of al Qaeda members talking to the Iranian regime, are these low-level, "harmless" al Qaeda Arab footsoldiers hiding in the foothills or villages of non-Arabic-speaking Iranian Kurdistan and Baluchistan, and if so, why would the Iranian regime be talking to them?) The *Times* adds that some "officials" suspect that al Qaeda forces, who've fled from northern Iraq, might be using "Iranian territory temporarily but not necessarily with the approval of the government in Tehran, *or* [emphasis added] that while some parts of the Iran government want them to leave, others want them to stay." This type of Iran observer consistently divides and subdivides responsibility for nefarious Iranian actions into small extremist cabals. Do this enough and one can even exempt Hojjat-ol-Islam Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, two of the principal powers in Iranian politics for over 20 years, from any responsibility for terrorism.

Getting it right on al Qaeda is an urgent issue for the Bush administration. If the White House concludes that bin Laden's organization is operationally alive in Iran—and this couldn't have happened without the support of the ruling mullahs—then the administration tempts an ugly fate by not responding militarily to the clerical regime's blatant provocation. Iran's ministry of intelligence and Revolutionary Guards Corps and the ruling clerics who control these institutions need to know that any cooperation with al Qaeda will lead to a ferocious American counterstrike against these institutions and the individuals who oversee them. If the ruling clerics know that we know al Qaeda holy warriors inside Iran were connected in any operational way with the May 12 suicide-bombings in Saudi Arabia, and we do nothing in response, then the Bush administration is clearly telling Rafsanjani and Khamenei, the Islamic Republic's two kingpins, that American calculations and reflexes have not really changed since the Clinton years. It is important to remember that clerical Iran in its terrorist attacks against the United States in Lebanon in 1983 and in Saudi Arabia in 1996 actually didn't try hard to hide its

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hand. Its efforts were nonetheless sufficient to allow Washington to choose moderation and restraint.

After the war in Afghanistan, the Bush administration let out an alarm about al Qaeda gaining refuge in Iran. The issue, for whatever reason, was then dropped. If that information was good—and it would be wise to compare closely the intercept and human intelligence from that episode with this one—then the Bush administration has already established one bad precedent. The restoration of American awe in the Middle East accomplished by the Iraq war could be considerably undone by a successful Iranian probing action. So, is the information the U.S. government possesses on an Iranian-al Qaeda connection good?

It is impossible to critique with any certainty clandestine intelligence that you cannot personally peruse. Human intelligence is always tricky to assess: Its quality is heavily dependent upon the controlling case officer and the particularities of the foreign agent, which are often unknowable. Intercept information is usually somewhat easier to handle. When it is good, it is ironclad. When former Iranian prime minister Shahpur Bakhtiar had his throat cut in his suburban Paris home in 1991 while under the protection of the French police, it was crystal clear that the Iranian intelligence service had orchestrated the operation. Somebody leaked an intercept text to the French press, conclusively proving official Iranian culpability. The Iranian government, of course, denied any involvement in the affair. Hashemi Rafsanjani, always entertaining, suggested that it was perhaps the work of vengeful Iranian expatriates or the Israelis. More than a few Iran observers and scholars also preferred to believe that Rafsanjani, then seen as a moderate cleric (he was) in favor of greater openness toward the West (he was), wouldn't have approved such an operation (he did).

If unauthorized elements of the Iranian government were granting al Qaeda refuge, you'd see all hell break loose in Tehran.

What is certain is that most of the skeptical views today on the intelligence on Iran and al Qaeda make little sense. It is unquestionably true that clerical Iran is not an Orwellian state. People cannot travel freely in the country, but they can move about without planning and not much trouble (at least if they are carrying Iranian identity papers). In certain regions, particularly in Baluchistan near the Afghan border, local smugglers enjoy considerable autonomy, especially at night. This is much less the case in the Kurdish regions of western Iran, where the Bush administration has also apparently tracked members of al Qaeda. The situation in Baluchistan now is not nearly as violent as it was a few years back, when a virtual state of war existed between drug smugglers and Iranian security services.

Nonetheless, when Tehran wants to make a show of force in any region, it can deploy forces fairly quickly. Also, the internal informant network in clerical Iran, though not nearly as effective as in Saddam's Stalinist Iraq, is good. It is just not credible that Arabic-speaking members of al Qaeda could sustain themselves for any length of time in Kurdistan or Baluchistan (where Arabic speakers are few) without Iran's internal security services getting wind of their presence. Why local Iranian Kurds or Baluchis would want to aid a foreign Arab group like al Qaeda is another question. Fleeing members of al Qaeda are probably not cash-rich, their drug-trade utility since the fall of the Taliban must at best be marginal, and the Kurds and the Baluchis would obviously not want to incur Tehran's wrath or closer supervision for foreign holy warriors unrelated by blood. If Tehran didn't mind al Qaeda in Baluchistan or Kurdistan, then the local reaction would, of course, be different.

If there were units of al Qaeda in Iran without permission—or, as certain U.S. officials, particularly in the State Department, like to suggest, in Iran courtesy of "rogue" elements in the Iranian government—you would also see a completely different reaction in Tehran. The Islamic Republic's clerics, no less than the shah, take Iranian national sovereignty quite seriously. If al Qaeda elements were running around their country unaccounted for, or, worse, unauthorized elements of the Iranian government were granting them refuge, you'd see all hell break loose in Tehran. Clerical Iran is not, like Saddam's Iraq, a closed society. You can hear the various factions of Iran's ruling elite constantly reprimanding each other. If al Qaeda were in Iran without permission or courtesy of "extremist" elements, you'd hear about the bosses of the ministry of intelligence, the Revolutionary Guards Corps, the Army, and the Gendarmerie getting their heads metaphorically taken off. You'd hear about officials of lower rank getting sacked. Rafsanjani and Khamenei are not pussycats. They are tough men. And you'd also hear the dissident and "reformist" elements of the clergy making great hay out of this. Iran's nonclerical political voices, at home and abroad, would not likely miss such an opportunity to underscore the incompetence of their mullah rivals. Yet, Iran is quiet. There are no accusations against anyone.

It should also be noted that the Guards Corps and the

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What's On The Minds of America's Leading Conservatives?

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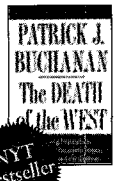

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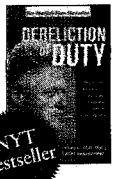

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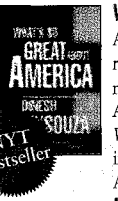

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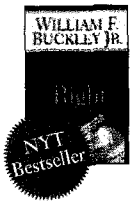

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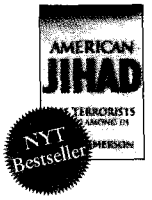

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ministry of intelligence are not bureaucratically fractured institutions. The Corps, as it has aged, has become ever more like the regular standing army, with established chains of command and dedicated communication channels. And the ministry of intelligence is perhaps the most streamlined, efficient organization in the Islamic Republic. It was the first institution to be thoroughly purged after the revolution in 1979 (which did not keep it from retaining the services of some officers from Savak, the Shah's intelligence and security service). In other words, if rogue elements are operating inside the Islamic Republic's intelligence service or Guards Corps, it is because Rafsanjani and Khamenei wish them to do so.

Also, philosophically, clerical Iran and al Qaeda aren't incompatible. For 25 years, there has never been a real moral debate among the ruling clergy about terrorism. One hears reports about discussions on the utility of terrorism, especially within the Combatant Clerics Association, which is in some ways an Oxford Union for VIP mullahs. The enormous influx of left-wing Western thought into Iran from the 1950s forward has taken a terrible toll on the traditional Muslim understanding of right and wrong (terrorism for any devout traditional Muslim is an egregious sin). It is by no means clear that among "reformist" elements of the clergy, in whose ranks we find the nearly powerless and timid President Mohammad Khatami, there is a different ethic on terrorism. The "reformist" clergy are nearly all children of the left, who have, more than their elders, soaked up third-world political theories that countenance terrorism against "Western imperialism." These "reformist" mullahs tend to be ferocious when it comes to Israel—the mild-mannered Khatami sometimes seems indistinguishable from the country's hard-core guide Ali Khamenei on the Jewish state and Hezbollah's continuing war against Israel and "Zionists" abroad. The morality that condones terrorism against Israel is the same rationalization that led clerical Iran to kill Americans in Lebanon in the 1980s and in Saudi Arabia in the 1990s. Terrorists can, of course, always become reformed terrorists, but we have not seen in Iran, especially among the ruling clergy, the type of gut-wrenching debate and soul-searching that comes when people purge themselves of their affection for extreme violence as a tool of statecraft and as a spiritual expression of God's wrath upon His enemies and the oppressed's vengeance against the strong.

Al Qaeda is, for the most faithful children of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's Islamic revolution, an answer to a 25-year-old quest. Al Qaeda consists of Sunni holy warriors who want first and foremost to attack the Great Satan, the United States. Contrary to what has been said by some, al Qaeda's declarations, guides, and battle manuals are remarkably free of the vicious anti-Shia propaganda that is typical of Saudi Wahhabi missionary literature. Osama bin Laden has been flawlessly ecumenical in his statements, instructing his faithful clearly that all Muslims, bad or good, should unite in the battle against America. Bin Laden's wickedly lethal number two, the Egyptian Ayman al-Zawahiri, has long been a favorite of Iran's revolutionary clergy, sort of a holy-warrior poster boy for correctly guided Sunni fundamentalists. The Sunni-Shia divide would certainly not keep Ali Khamenei, who believes that Sunni Muslims, too, should resist America and its baleful culture, from welcoming the brave holy warriors of al Qaeda into Iran.

Regardless of what conclusion the Bush White House reaches on the quality of its intelligence about al Qaeda in the Islamic Republic, an unpleasant collision between clerical Iran and the United States seems likely within the next few years. Iran's nuclear program and its inevitably hostile position toward the development of a federal, secular democratic system in Iraq (still apparently the Bush administration's goal) will force Washington to become much more diplomatically aggressive toward Iran—and could provoke U.S. military strikes, depending on Tehran's nuclear intransigence and its ability to develop Hezbollah-like forces inside Iraq. Also, if the White House is serious about applying the war on terrorism to Islamic holy warriors in Tehran's pay, which would certainly include Hezbollah and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, then military confrontation there is also possible. The odds are decent, however, that the Bush administration will default to the traditional American diplomatic position that terrorism against Israel is bad but insufficient to provoke the United States into much diplomatic, let alone military, hostility toward the state sponsor of this terrorism.

But what should the United States do to checkmate clerical Iran's pursuit of nuclear weaponry? The first thing we ought to do is not deceive ourselves about Iran's nuclear intentions and the broad-based support that the weapons program enjoys throughout the clergy. The "reformist" clergy, who are more nationalist-inspired than their old-fashioned revolutionary brethren, love the idea of a nuclear-armed Iran easily as much as Rafsanjani and Khamenei. Bernard Hourcade, of the Centre National de Recherche Scientifique in Paris, has tracked the "reformist" clergy firsthand for years. He has certainly not seen a "dovish" anti-nuke attitude among the "reformers," who in any case have repeatedly proven themselves inept at countering

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the political power of Rafsanjani and Khamenei. Though it is possible that Rafsanjani and Khamenei could decide to restrain the Islamic Republic's nuclear ambitions just short of the fabrication of a nuclear weapon, it seems highly unlikely given the time and money these two have invested in the effort.

And the reasons to go nuclear are now far stronger than they were in 1991, when the ruling clergy decided to make the development of nuclear arms a top priority. Serious discussions of nuclear deterrence occurred in the Combatant Clerics Association after the Gulf War. The conclusion was reached that the United States probably would not have countered Iraq's invasion of Kuwait if Saddam Hussein had had nuclear weaponry (which he would've had but for Israel's preemptive strike against the Osirak reactor in 1981). The Islamic Republic's chattering classes regularly now remark on the differing American approaches to Saddam's Iraq and Kim Jong Il's North Korea, which already has nuclear weaponry. Since Mohammad Khatami's public announcement on February 9, 2003, that Iran was developing its own means to produce nuclear fuel, senior officials have made it unmistakably clear that the nuclear program, in their eyes, makes the Islamic Republic more secure. It is quite probable that for Rafsanjani and Khamenei, and perhaps for many in the loyal "reformist" camp, the possession of nuclear weaponry spiritually reinforces the regime from domestic as well as foreign threats. In any case, whether you're a "Khomeini-heavy" or "Khomeini-lite" cleric, the case for an Iranian bomb is compelling.

The clerical regime may well now be sufficiently advanced in its nuclear program that foreign assistance is not required for building a bomb.

We also ought not deceive ourselves about the chances diplomacy can stall Iran's quest for nuclear weaponry. The clerical regime may well now be sufficiently advanced in its nuclear program that foreign assistance is not required for building a bomb. It's just a matter of Iranian engineering and time—in other words, the Manhattan Project in 1943. Washington should certainly proceed on all fronts diplomatically against the Islamic Republic, encouraging, cajoling, and threatening Iran's trading partners to cut off tech transfers. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) should also be encouraged to become as rigorous as possible toward the Islamic Republic, and a massive diplomatic effort ought to be launched to arm-twist the Iranians into signing the 1993 protocol to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which would allow for more intrusive inspections of their nuclear sites. But we need to be honest: The odds of this diplomatic offensive proving successful are poor. The Clinton administration worked hard on this front, with little to show for its efforts. We can huff and puff all we want, but it's not likely the Europeans, the Russians, the Chinese, the Pakistanis, and the North Koreans are all going to cooperate effectively.

In any case, given how advanced Iran's nuclear program appears to be, it's likely that if the Iranians still require foreign help, they don't need much. A gap anywhere in the technological *cordon sanitaire* might well be sufficient to give them the bomb. And the Europeans, the Russians, and the Chinese are all now trying to expand trade with the Islamic Republic, not shrink it. Russian atomic energy minister Aleksandr Rumyantsev declared on May 19 that Russia has no plans to freeze its nuclear-energy cooperation with Iran, which "has not violated any international agreements in this sphere so far." (It is a good bet that Tehran won't appear to be violating any non-proliferation agreements until it tests its first weapon.) Iran's critical trading partners could of course become fastidious about selling nuclear-related technology to Iran, particularly the ever-tricky dual-use items, at a time when they're hoping for expanding trade. Then again, past history may hold. It seems clear that the only thing that could compel such trading partners into a more rigorous stance toward Iran is the certain knowledge that (1) the United States will commercially retaliate in a massive way against them if they do not and (2) Washington will preemptively bomb Iran's nuclear facilities if we don't get maximum compliance.

But Secretary of State Colin Powell, in an Iraq redux, has already suggested that the United States has no military plans against the Islamic Republic. Powell's number two, Richard Armitage, has also been making dovish and downright odd comments about the virtues of Iran's clerical democracy. The State Department's organic fondness for process and negotiation makes it very unlikely, if State is allowed to lead on the Iran portfolio, that the countries concerned will be convinced of America's seriousness about the Islamic Republic's nuclear program. It would be amusing—for the Democrats, delightfully ironic—if part two of the Bush administration's Axis of Evil doctrine came down to encouraging the IAEA to become more aggressive about Iran and sending America's diplomats to cajole foreigners into an Iran-suspicious trade association. More or less, this is where the Clintonites left off.

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Nor are the covert-action ideas floating about the Pentagon and certain think tanks going to save us from making very hard choices about Iran's coming nukes. Bureaucratically and legally, covert action has almost always been under the control of the Central Intelligence Agency. And the CIA's clandestine service has strongly disliked covert action for more than 30 years. Don't let the sexy magazine articles post-9/11 about CIA ninjas and worldwide anti-al Qaeda covert action fool you. The clandestine service hates covert action that it has to start from scratch, that can't be jointly run with (i.e., subcontracted to) some foreign intelligence service, and that involves mobilizing large groups of people for concrete political action. This is very hard to do, chances of success are never good, chances of embarrassment are high, and the educational, linguistic, and cultural requirements for case officers who must run these programs are vastly too demanding for most of the officers whom Langley can actually field. And the CIA especially hates Iranian covert action. This has been true for a very long time. Langley will fight either openly in the bureaucratic trenches or stealthily within its own walls any Iranian covert action program thrown its way. And there is nothing the Pentagon can do about it.

The Pentagon could, of course, try to run its own covert-action program, assuming it could convince the White House and Congress to go along (which isn't likely). But the Pentagon would have many of the same personnel problems that Langley has. Covert action is difficult. Agents have to work at it, slowly and painfully gaining expertise that will in most circumstances end in disappointment. The brightest minds of the Defense Department cannot pull covert action off the shelf and seriously expect it to work before the Islamic Republic develops a nuclear weapon.

And even if the Pentagon, or another government agency, could come up with an interesting plan—and there is nothing wrong with trying—the circumstances in Iran would very likely frustrate even the most thoughtful efforts. The Islamic Republic isn't the Iran of 1953, where a tiny group of people were the pivotal political players. Iran today is a massive, modern society with a very big power matrix. Though the clerical regime is broadly detested, millions of Iranians are invested in the system. Millions of Iranians who hate the mullahs still know they are bound to the regime. Civil unrest produced by popular disgust could conceivably bring down the system, and the ruling clergy fear that possibility. But the mullahs have so far been wise in how they handle dissent. They harass and kill judiciously—enough to intimidate the society, but not enough to galvanize widespread violent opposition.

Iranian society, which was deeply scarred by the revolution and the Iran-Iraq War, still appears to fear the violence that would inevitably arrive with a serious confrontation. Until young men feel differently, it is difficult to see how a new revolutionary movement can develop. It is conceivable that an effective covert action against the mullahs could be devised, but it's just not likely within the time frame allowed by Iran's nuclear program, which may well produce nuclear weapons within two years. If President Bush and other American officials want to use their bully pulpits more often to support liberal democracy in Iran, that can't hurt. Millions of Iranians want to be free, and it's good to let them know that America opposes their oppressors. Any American effort to help the Iranian people should start with regular denunciations of the regime by Washington VIPs. If this at least can't be done, then it would probably be best that we not invest time, money, American prestige, and Iranian lives in trying to do more, covertly or overtly.

Which brings us to the last option: a preemptive military strike against Iran's nuclear facilities. It is obviously an unappealing choice. But it is the only option that offers a good chance of delaying Iran's production of nuclear weapons.

We can, of course, give the other avenues time to work. But we shouldn't deceive ourselves. Unless we have rock-solid intelligence that Iran's nuclear program has gone into cold storage because of our diplomatic campaign, we should assume the earliest date conceivable for the Islamic Republic to have the bomb, and then decide whether we want to learn to live with Rafsanjani's and Khamenei's nuke.

An American preemptive strike against the nuclear facilities might fail—the Iranians have been putting their facilities underground and hiding them as best they can. We think we know where they are, but we might be wrong. And a strike could produce enormous anger in Iran. But it could also unblock Iran's frozen political system. Once the nationalist outrage has died down, once Iranians focus again on their daily lives under the mullahs, the political debate will start to roar. Khamenei and Rafsanjani will have put Iran on a lethal collision course with America. There is not an Iranian alive, including Khamenei and Rafsanjani, who doesn't know that in such a contest, Iran loses. So we can give diplomacy a chance. But in the end, if we turn away from preemptive action, then the "axis of evil" doctrine is over. The Bush administration, if it is still in power, may not want to admit this, but the ruling clergy in Tehran will no doubt point it out once they have the bomb. ♦

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PBS's Pontificator

Whatever happened to Bill Moyers's promise to disclose conflicts of interest?

By Stephen F. Hayes

Just to declare my interest at the outset: Bill Moyers and I have a history. I wrote an article about him ("PBS's Televangelist," February 25, 2002) that made Moyers mad. The gist of the piece was simple: Bill Moyers flagrantly indulges in the same conflicts of interest, Washington logrolling, and mutual back-scratching that he finds deeply objectionable in, well, everyone other than Bill Moyers. There were piles of documents—from IRS filings to internal records from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting—that supported this conclusion.

In his dual roles as head of the $75 million Florence and John Schumann Foundation and PBS Pontificator-in-Chief, Moyers regularly interviews the people he funds (conflict of interest). He has gotten rich at "the public trough," producing shows partially financed by taxpayers and lining his pockets with the royalties (profiteering). And while he demands strict disclosure of others in the public sector, Moyers rarely tells his viewers when his interview subjects are the recipients of his foundation's grants or discloses details of his own financial relationship with public broadcasting. The Enron-like lack of transparency at PBS has caught the attention of Rep. Billy Tauzin, chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which has oversight of PBS. Tauzin has asked the General Accounting Office to look into government-funded broadcasting, indicating a particular interest in Moyers and his refusal to let taxpayers know what's happening with their money.

Not surprisingly, Moyers didn't like the scrutiny. In the fusillade of insults that he sent my way, one claim stuck out as something that could later be verified. He said that he always disclosed the fact when a Schumann grantee appeared on one of his programs. The claim wasn't true when he made it. But surely he has since mended his ways? Well, not exactly.

Stephen F. Hayes is a staff writer at The Weekly Standard. *Thanks for research assistance on this article is owed to intern David Hackett and to the Media Research Center in Alexandria, Virginia, where we plodded through more than 50 hours of* Now with Bill Moyers.

Typical was an interview with pollster Daniel Yankelovich, which aired on June 14, 2002. Moyers ladled on the praise, describing Yankelovich as "the grand old man of listening, recognized the world over for careful and credible research on American values and public opinion." Public Agenda, a Yankelovich nonprofit that does polling on policy and social issues, "has long been at the forefront of social research on national issues," Moyers said.

Moyers asked Yankelovich about a topic close to Moyers's heart, a subject that animates much of his work with the Schumann Foundation and his advocacy on public television. "So when the watchdogs become lapdogs there's nobody to bark for the people who have been exploited?" Yankelovich: "Yeah, and you know not only lapdogs, but become sort of interested in—their own doggie pursuits. . . . You know, conflict of interest—it's been meaningless the last couple of years on Wall Street and other places. It's as if the concept didn't even exist. Hardly paid lip service to it, or just lip service to it." As he finished this thought, the identifier at the bottom of the screen reminded viewers that these were the views of "Daniel Yankelovich, Founder 'Public Agenda.'"

One wonders if the show's executive editor, Judith Davidson Moyers, planned it as a clever bit of irony. Mrs. Moyers is on the board of Public Agenda. The Public Agenda Foundation was a recipient of a two-year, $300,000 grant from the Schumann Foundation in 2001. Not that any of this was mentioned. Conflict of interest? It's as if the concept didn't even exist.

Last October 4, Moyers began a segment of his weekly PBS news series *Now with Bill Moyers* with this rant:

> Out of sight and out of mind big energy producers are getting the deluxe treatment. Drilling for oil in Alaska's pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Weakening auto emissions standards. Billions of dollars in tax breaks and subsidies [footage of energy plant]. Just a few of the giveaways under consideration as part of the Bush energy bill now being hammered out by a Senate and House conference committee on Capitol Hill.

Continued Moyers: "According to the watchdog group Public Citizen, power companies pushing for the law's

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repeal gave more than $15 million to federal candidates."

But who will watch the watchdog? Public Citizen is a frequent recipient of Schumann grants: $42,000 in 1999 to "fund a full-time investigative reporter to research and write on the nexus between special interest political contributions and the outcome of major domestic policy debates." Another $75,000 in 2000 for "the Public Citizen Congress Watch investigative research program." A further $204,000 in 2001 for "general support of Public Citizen's educational efforts." In fact, from 1991 to 2001, the last year for which IRS records are available, Moyers's Schumann Foundation gave Public Citizen a total of $411,000.

Seems like a one-sided deal, doesn't it? Courtesy of Moyers, Public Citizen gets a lot of money and, courtesy of PBS, it gets publicity for its work. Not to worry. Public Citizen can scratch backs, too, noting on its website: "It is not often that we advertise for TV programs, but we'll make an exception this time. Bill Moyers has done a documentary on PBS entitled: 'Trading Democracy,'" which you can order from Public Citizen "for $29.95 (plus shipping)."

The Sierra Club, another Schumann grantee, similarly shills for Moyers. In its campaign to "Stop Fast Track" free trade agreements, the club advises "friends of the environment" on how to "take action." Item 2—"Request a free copy of a stunning new documentary by Bill Moyers on NAFTA's corporate lawsuit. . . . Screen these videos in your homes for friends and neighbors and help generate letters on fast track to your elected officials." (The video in question was also "Trading Democracy.")

This isn't the first time, or even the second time, Moyers has been caught funding his own sources. Consider this report from the November 1, 1999, issue of a weekly newspaper called *Current*, devoted to covering public broadcasting:

> When Bill Moyers interviewed three campaign-finance-reform advocates for a PBS documentary aired in June, he didn't think to disclose that they had received grants from a foundation he runs. "It should have occurred to me to identify them," he told *Current* last week. "Next time, I'll be sure to do so."

Still, Moyers was defiant. "I don't see that it's a conflict, but I do believe in disclosure," he told Frazier Moore, the television writer for the Associated Press, shortly after these questions were first raised. "We won't give our critics another chance to ignore the journalism for their own purposes."

Leave aside for the moment Moyers's assertion that his high-dollar advocacy constitutes journalism. The PR he does for his grant recipients, and the research they do for him, makes that at least an open question. And leave aside, too, the rather amusing claim that there is no conflict of interest in conducting interviews with subjects who have received millions of dollars that you control. (Imagine how Moyers would react if, say, Rush Limbaugh gave $1 million to the Heritage Foundation and then repeatedly interviewed its experts for his nationwide audience, and did so over a taxpayer-funded medium, like NPR.)

Bill Moyers isn't the victim of unfair attacks, as he would have us believe. He just refuses to practice what he preaches. When THE WEEKLY STANDARD asked Moyers in February 2002 about his continued funding of sources, he bristled:

> Yes, sometimes—not often—a Schumann Foundation grantee shows up in one of my programs; the concerns of democracy that interest me as a citizen also interest me as a journalist (just as, say, a prominent conservative columnist may have a penchant for baseball and write about it even while serving on the board of a major league team). But on the rare occasion it happens, and I know it, I make that fact public.

Is Moyers clueless about who receives the millions of dollars his foundation dispenses in grant money? A review of his PBS program since that statement shows that Moyers regularly interviews or cites research from his grant recipients but rarely acknowledges a financial relationship. Here is a partial list of the groups Moyers has funded and featured on his show without disclosure. (The dollar amount represents the total given from 1991, his first year as president of the Schumann Foundation, to 2001, as well as grants from the affiliated Florence Fund.)

Annenberg School of Communication—$100,000
Aspen Institute—$218,000
Brennan Center for Justice, NYU—$425,000
Center for Investigative Reporting—$803,000
Democracy 21—$200,000
Environmental Working Group—$234,000
Friends of the Earth—$166,500
Media Access Project—$125,000
The *Nation* Magazine—$135,000
Natural Resources Defense Council—$105,000
New America Foundation—$750,000
Public Agenda Foundation—$150,000
Public Citizen—$411,000
Sierra Club—$584,000
Union of Concerned Scientists—$335,000
World Resources Institute—$75,000

That's $4,806,000 over the past decade to groups that have gotten free PR on Moyers's show just in the past 16 months. In several cases, he aired stories reported, or at least co-reported, by grant recipients like the *Nation* and

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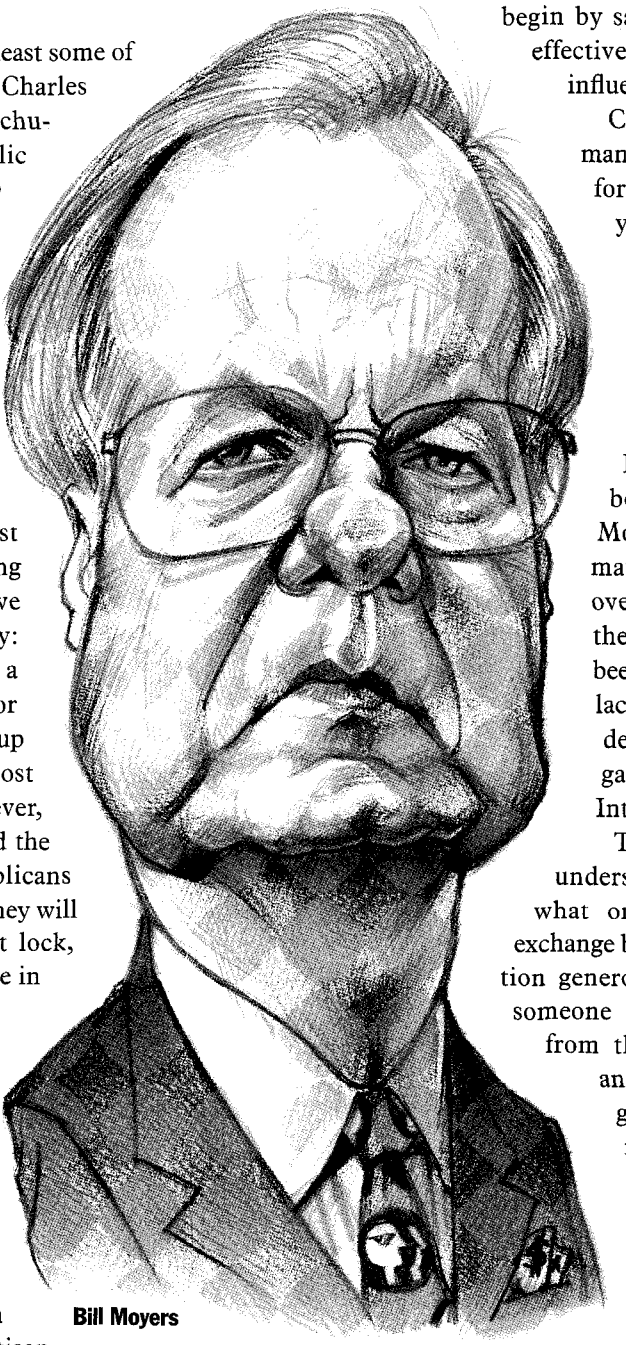
the Center for Investigative Reporting. In one instance, Moyers encouraged his viewers to buy the next issue of the *Nation* for more information. Given all that, it would probably be simpler for him just to add game-show boilerplate to the end of his broadcasts ("promotional considerations have been paid to some of the guests on this show").

Moyers has disclosed at least some of his conflicts. But, as Charles Lewis, head of the Schumann-funded Center for Public Integrity, pointed out on *Now with Bill Moyers* last year, things are not always as they seem. "Everyone says they're for disclosure," he said. "Bottom line is, that's a lot of hooey. They're not for disclosure. It's just a line they use."

That claim came on the October 18, 2002, episode of *Now*. The sweater-wearing host began with a soft-spoken warning about what, for him, must have been a horrifying possibility: "President Bush is off on a marathon trip raising funds for Republican candidates. Coming up in three weeks is one of the most important midterm elections ever, with control of public policy and the public purse at stake. If Republicans take the Senate and the House, they will control the federal government lock, stock, and barrel for the first time in 50 years."

As soft jazz music drifted from the speakers, Moyers welcomed Lewis to the cozy confines of the *Now* studio. "Once upon a time," he said, "Chuck Lewis was a television journalist. His last job was producing for *60 Minutes*. But then he went straight, and in 1989 he founded the nonpartisan Center for Public Integrity, which makes him the loneliest man in Washington." Lewis and his center, Moyers continued, are among "the country's most respected analysts of money and power."



Bill Moyers

Illustration by Ismael Roldan

To his credit, Moyers offered a disclosure on air, at the start of his interview. "You and I have been kindred spirits and allies on this issue of money and politics for a long time now. In fact, I want my audience to know that many years ago when you were starting this center, the Schumann Foundation, which I head, was one of your important funders. That's been some time now, but I've been following the work you do and I have to begin by saying we haven't been very effective, have we, in reducing the influence of money in politics."

Call it a half-disclosure. Schumann didn't just fund the Center for Public Integrity "many years ago," and it certainly hasn't "been some time now" since Lewis and Moyers collaborated. According to the most recent publicly available IRS documents, Moyers gave the Center for Public Integrity $500,000 in both 1999 and 2000. In fact, Moyers's foundation has dramatically *increased* its funding over the past decade. And if their work together has not been very effective, it's not for a lack of resources. Over the last decade, Moyers's foundation gave the Center for Public Integrity a total of $3,305,000.

The interview, to use a broad understanding of the term, was what one might expect from an exchange between the head of a foundation generous to left-wing causes and someone who has received millions from that foundation in the past and, presumably, would like to go on receiving more millions in the future. A sampling:

MOYERS: *Is there any way to break the grip of money on politics?*

LEWIS: *I think the way to break—there are basic things that are, I think, rather common sense. Number one is transparency.*

MOYERS: *Openness.*

LEWIS: *Openness. Any politician that's standing for office that has any entity that's secretly raising millions of dollars*

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needs to be outed and they need to, they have a lot of explaining to do to the American people.

Transparency, these days, is getting scarcer, Moyers and Lewis agreed, with those who control political money doing everything they can to hide its influence. As Lewis complained about the insincerity of those who advocate disclosure, the show's producers plugged his organization on the bottom of the screen: "More on the Center for Public Integrity—PBS.org." Moments later, Moyers wondered incredulously at his guest's persistence.

MOYERS: *[Some people] even say it's too late to save democracy [pause, bite lip], but you keep trying.*

LEWIS: *Well, I don't think it's too late to save democracy. Who said that? I mean, why would they say that? I mean, we're still living, aren't we, we're still breathing. These decisions affect the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat. . . . I'm not willing to give up on democracy. We need to know what these bastards are up to. I'm sorry, we do. And we need to start tracking them, we need to hold them accountable and we need to ask them inconvenient questions.*

Inconvenient questions—that's one thing Lewis did not get from Moyers.

MOYERS: *How do people find out about the Center for Public Integrity?*

LEWIS: *Well, you can go to* publicintegrity.org, *that's our website.*

Moyers came closest to providing the sort of disclosure he's always promised when Lewis appeared on his show on February 7, 2003. In the middle of a discussion of civil liberties, Moyers offered his viewers a solid representation of his relationship to Lewis and the Center for Public Integrity, saying, "the foundation that I serve on has been a big supporter of yours, and you've been a big supporter of our journalism." Nothing to cavil at there. But at the end of the show, more evasion. "Bill Moyers is president of the Schumann Foundation, which provided assistance to the Center for Public Integrity in its formative stages." Maybe the center's still in its formative stages.

Shortly before Moyers's financing of the guests on his show first came under scrutiny in 1999, his Florence and John Schumann Foundation gave birth, with an initial grant authorization of $6,250,000, to another grantmaking organization known as the Florence Fund. Moyers installed his son, John, as the executive director of the Florence Fund. The group's statement of purpose describes, succinctly and precisely, what Bill Moyers has tried to do by blurring the distinction between his non-profit and public broadcasting roles: "To invigorate public debate by helping public interest groups put their messages and work products before larger audiences or to penetrate target audiences more deeply. Special interests include the role of money in politics, the environment and media criticism."

The Florence Fund appears to meet its objective. With grants to left-wing groups and the creation of *TomPaine.com* (a frequent advertiser in this magazine), the fund has provided another voice to those who believe the Democratic National Committee, the Wilderness Society, and Peter Jennings are too conservative. It has had another consequence—it's now more difficult to trace the funding Bill Moyers directs to his work in public broadcasting.

In 1999, the Florence Fund gave just two grants. One of them, for $54,000, went to the Ozarks chapter of the Sierra Club for unspecified purposes. That chapter of the environmental group has been doing battle for years with the Doe Run Chemical Company, which it claims "has been releasing lead and other toxins into the environment and endangering citizens." That comment came in an April 2, 2002, press release from the chapter, just as the fight intensified over health repercussions and potential punishments, including one that had the company buying up homes in the vicinity of its Herculaneum, Mo., plant. Five weeks later, on May 10, 2002, Moyers featured the town, and the fight, on a special edition of *Now*, called "Kids and Chemicals."

As he wrapped up the show, Moyers told his viewers that, "under pressure, Doe Run agreed to buy 160 homes. The company has until August to make its emissions legal." Some of that pressure came from the state government in Missouri. But some of it came from the Schumann-funded Sierra Club chapter. As Herculaneum resident Jim Kasten told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* on April 21, 2002: "Our kids are being used as political pawns by the Coalition for the Environment and the Sierra Club. Their goal is to close down the smelter." Another resident, John Stockton, added: "Don't misunderstand. We're not defending Doe Run. They've done a miserable job, and they need to clean up. But the evidence is coming in that things are improving. All we're saying is that we need to rely on good science, not scare tactics."

Those views were hard to find in Moyers's report, which, like so many of his David-and-Goliath plot lines, created the impression that the combatants in this fight were suffering citizens and public-spirited environmentalists on one side, with an evil, polluting Big Corporation on the other.

It's a frequent Moyers theme. On April 19, 2002, Moyers ended his show with a pitch for his latest PBS documentary, *America's First River*. Over spectacular footage of New York wilderness, a gentle voice floats from television sets across the country: "It's quite a river, the Hudson,

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flowing from near the Canadian border down past New York harbor to the Atlantic. And it's quite a story we report, from the American Revolution to the epic battle between Jack Welch and the people up and down the Hudson who fought him tooth and toenail over PCBs dumped in the river by GE."

Tough choice—the beautiful outdoors or a powerful CEO who wants to pollute. It's a bit more complicated than Moyers would have us believe, of course. And there's one detail that he left out: In 2001, the Florence Fund paid $104,397 to something called "Citizens to Clean Up GE," which organized those "people up and down the Hudson."

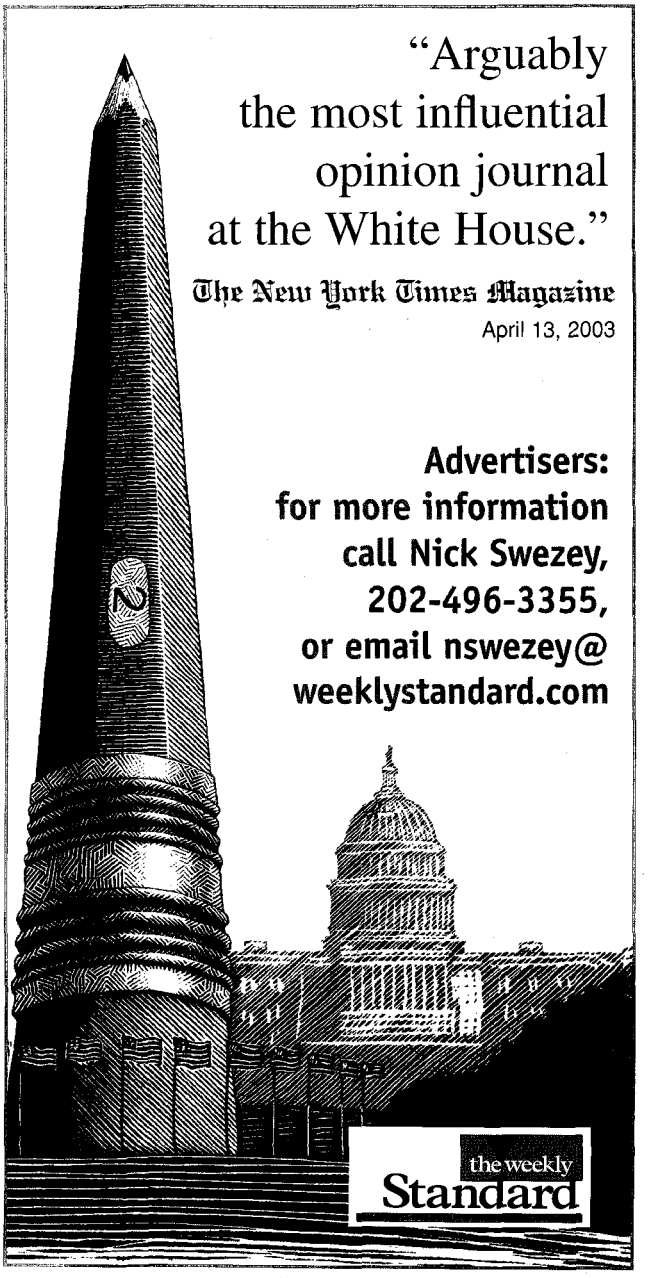
As the segment wound down, Moyers warned that rivers throughout the country are in jeopardy. He ended on an optimistic note. "All is not yet lost. What happened on the Hudson can happen elsewhere if people love something enough to fight for it."

We know about some of the relationships cited above only because Moyers identified the institutional ties. What is more difficult to determine is how often Moyers relies on experts from organizations he has funded without telling his viewers. Take Pamela Gilbert, who in a *Now* episode last February on campaign finance was identified only as a lawyer and former director of the Consumer Product Safety Commission. But she was also the chief congressional lobbyist for Public Citizen throughout the early 1990s. Or take John White. In a story this January about anti-SUV legislation in California, Moyers identifies White as simply an "environmental consultant." White was also a top lobbyist for the Schumann-funded Sierra Club, a group that pushed strenuously for the new legislation. At least once, Moyers needed to look no further than his own board of directors for an expert. When *America's First River* ran a week after Moyers promoted it on *Now*, the special prominently featured environmental activist Bill McKibben, who earned $25,000 in 2000 and 2001 for his work on the Schumann Foundation.

And on it goes.

Even as PBS executives tolerate Moyers's advocacy, he is busy working to move public broadcasting further left. One Schumann-funded outfit, Citizens for Independent Public Broadcasting, laments the "conservative bias" on PBS. As Moyers himself likes to say, I'm not making this up. According to a CIPB analysis, "U.S. Public Broadcasting: Structure and Programming," "large numbers of small stations in conservative pockets of the country exercise great influence over the national schedule." Later, the report complains, "PBS underwriting guidelines, while friendly to corporations, ban support from organized labor and public interest groups."

Moyers is of course free to broadcast and fund whatever he wants. And journalism ethics classes can debate his practice of interviewing grantees. Much of what happens in Washington is a collaboration of likeminded people who work together to promote ideas and causes they believe in—in this, Moyers is no more sinister than those he targets on his show. All of that would be his own business were it not for the fact that his show, which is a collaborative effort with National Public Radio, takes taxpayer money. We don't know how much because PBS doesn't reveal funding for individual programs. ♦



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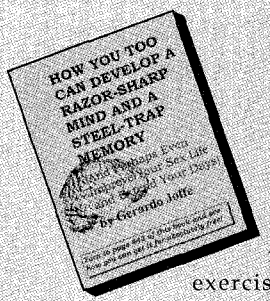

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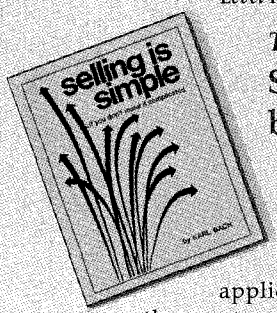

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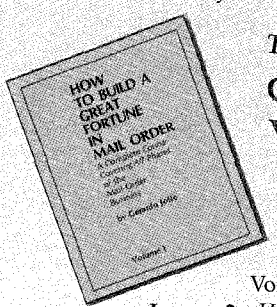

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True Enough

Bill McKibben's useful assault on the unfettered biogenetic project

By Wesley J. Smith

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People aren't smart enough, strong enough, pretty enough, healthy enough, talented enough, or agile enough the way we are. Worse yet, our miserable lives are over far too soon. The human condition stinks, and then we die. That seems to be the vague despair that drives the partisans of an unfettered biotech revolution, ideologues who countenance no limits in their near obsessive quest for human biological perfection.

But Bill McKibben has spotted it clearly, this inchoate and incoherent existential dread that really does—like a character in a Dostoyevsky novel—resent, in equal measure, life and the death that will take it away. In *Enough: Staying Human in an Engineered Age*, McKibben sees both the problem and the way in which adherents to the emerging philosophy of "transhumanism" fervently want to believe that *Science*—the capital letter is necessary, for Science is unto them as a jealous and omnipotent god—will be their savior from this mortal conundrum.

Driven by an ethos of radical individualism that accepts no restraints and disdains all taboos, hubristically believing that they possess the wisdom to improve the human species, yearning desperately for corporeal immortality, transhumanists intend to unleash biotechnology, robotic science, and nanotechnology—and thereby recreate life on a superior model of their own imagining. Some might call this "playing God," but for the many transhumanists that deny that God exists it is simply a matter of "seizing control of human evolution." Just as God did, only this time without His mistakes.

Enough
Staying Human in an Engineered Age
by Bill McKibben
Times, 255 pp.,$25

This is folly, McKibben warns. These emerging technologies are so elemental and powerful that, unfettered, they are more likely to lead to "species suicide" than salvation. McKibben is not the first to wrestle with these crucial matters, and he won't be the last. But what makes *Enough* so helpful is that he analyzes the challenges and posits solutions to them from the far political left. He thus reinforces the small cadre of progressive techno-skeptics—people like Jeremy Rifkin, author of *Biotech Century*, Stuart Newman of the Council for Responsible Genetics, and Rich Hayes of the Center for Genetics and Society.

Moreover, McKibben's relative youth and his unabashed radical environmentalism (in addition to this book, he is the author of *The End of Nature* and a vocal proponent of "simple living") could positively influence the sort of people who might not otherwise be reachable in the ongoing debate over the proper limits to place on scientific research and technological knowledge.

McKibben begins *Enough* by describing the threats posed to the

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Wesley J. Smith is a senior fellow at the Discovery Institute. He is the author of Culture of Death: The Assault on Medical Ethics in America *and of the forthcoming updated edition of* Forced Exit: The Slippery Slope From Assisted Suicide to Legalized Murder.

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human future with cloning and genetic engineering, noting that genetic engineers intend to do to human babies

> what we have already done to salmon and wheat, pine trees and tomatoes. That is to make them better in some way; to delete, modify, or add genes . . . so that the resulting person will produce proteins that make them taller and more muscular, or smarter and less aggressive, maybe handsome and possibly straight, perhaps sweet. Even happy.

On the surface, McKibben admits, this may seem "a deeply attractive picture." But the game of parental genetic-one-upmanship is certain disaster. Once the fundamentals of genetic enhancement are understood, biotechnologists' ability to alter progeny would increase exponentially. This would result in built-in human obsolescence. Just as today's top-of-the line computer is quickly outdated, the enhanced baby would, within the few short years it would take to grow into childhood, become genetically inferior to the later-born genetically enhanced. Tomorrow's impressive twenty-point IQ enhancement would pale against the next day's forty-point increase. Rather than increasing a child's chances to excel in life, the result of a genetics arms race would actually be to set up future failure as older models find it increasingly difficult to compete against the continual flow of new and improved humans continually entering the competitive marketplaces of school, college, career, athletics, and the arts.

And what would become of parental pride in their children's achievements, McKibben asks, once parents became "programmers" and their children "products"? Parents would be able to take "precisely as much pride in [their child's] achievement as . . . in the achievements of [their] dishwashing detergent. It was designed to produce streak-free glassware, and she was designed to be sweet-tempered, social, and smart." Not only that, but our children would, in essence, become our slaves. Today, children urged to pursue unliked activities based on parental desire can eventually quit and find their own way. But, how would children rebel against their gene enhancements that would inexorably push them with the power of sheer biology in parentally predetermined directions? In a sense, our children would never grow up and become independent beings. It could mark an end to truly human freedom.

McKibben notes that these hazards of posthumanity do not end with the biological. Robotics, if allowed to get out of control, could result in "conscious" machines. McKibben may be alarmist when he writes that by the end of the century the distinction between humans and computers could cease to exist. But surely it would be folly to build computers so awesome that "a penny's worth of computing power . . . will be a billion times as powerful as all human brains now on the planet."

Only affirmation of the intrinsic value of life will counter the misanthropy McKibben correctly sees behind the posthuman agenda.

Nanotechnology, in which machines are literally the size of a few molecules, presents obvious potential benefits. One day "nanobots" might cruise our circulatory systems looking for trouble and making repairs. Futurists even foresee an end to work as agriculture and industry are replaced by billions of "nanotech assemblers" engineered to work busily rearranging carbon molecules to make any food or product their owners would want.

But nanotechnology could also be exceedingly dangerous. Noting that researchers recently manufactured an infectious poliovirus from diagrams contained in a book, McKibben warns that nano-sized fabricated diseases could spread havoc. Worse, the assemblers upon which futurists put so much hope to end human want might learn to replicate themselves and go completely out of control. This could lead, some techno-skeptics have warned, to the end of all things as the hyperactive assemblers eventually rearrange the molecules of the entire natural world—reducing the planet to a huge soup of "gray goo."

Maybe. The idea that molecular-sized assemblers will someday provide instant cups of tea or suits of clothes, as in a *Star Trek* movie, seems too fantastical to force alarm about the apocalyptic scenarios that these technologies could cause if they ran out of control. But even if he sometimes overstates his case about nanotechnology—at least, I hope he does—McKibben is well worth heeding when he demands that we reexamine our reverence for scientific knowledge as by definition good. It is not Luddite to worry, as McKibben does, about the "unlimited development of knowledge." There are foreseeable and unforeseeable consequences to any human endeavor. We should never forget the lesson in needed humility taught by the unsinkable *Titanic*.

So what should we do? McKibben's answer is in his book's title. We should say: Enough. We should accept natural limitations. We should "survey the world we now inhabit and proclaim it good." And we should defend humanity from the nihilism of the misanthropes. Unfortunately, to accomplish this important task, McKibben's resources seem limited. Many in his left-leaning audience—particularly the extreme environmentalists—increasingly seem to see the sheer existence of human beings as a blight on the planet. In answer, McKibben's defense of humanity reads a little like Stuart Smalley feel-goodism: We are good enough, smart enough, and, doggone it, the planet likes us.

Indeed, only a full-throated and unapologetic affirmation of the intrinsic value of human life will be able to counter the misanthropy that McKibben correctly sees as the driving force

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behind the posthuman agendas. From what he writes in *Enough*, I would guess that McKibben does not believe sufficiently in the intrinsic value of human life to make a robust case. And that presents a serious problem for his defense of humanity.

McKibben also isn't necessarily willing to follow his own proposed remedy of self restraint. He insists, for instance, that any potential scientific advance that could have the power to make us "posthuman" should be "presumed dangerous until proven otherwise." Yet he then goes on to accept therapeutic cloning in the name of finding new medical cures.

But therapeutic cloning is a posthuman biotechnology that authorizes the manufacture of human life for the purpose of treating it as a mere thing to be harvested and destroyed. Therapeutic cloning transforms nascent humans into patentable and marketable medical products. And if that were not enough, the information that could be gleaned from such research would be quickly used in precisely the ways that McKibben is against. Why should the reader of *Enough* agree to reject the posthuman endeavors of tomorrow, when the author won't reject those being attempted today?

McKibben also risks alienating potential allies with his condescension toward religion. Religious arguments, he warns, "scare the majority of Americans who, for instance, support a woman's right to abortion." Such arguments offend because "it is too easy to imagine such talk is the chatter of people who don't want evolution taught in the schools." But this is merely to surrender to unfair stereotypes. Indeed, I have heard and read many of the same secular arguments McKibben makes presented just as eloquently and powerfully by explicitly religious techno-skeptics.

These concerns do not unduly limit the book's importance or profundity. Bill McKibben has done a top-notch job of researching and writing about one of the most important topics of the current age. *Enough* is an important book and needs to be read by everyone with an interest in keeping the human future human. ♦

All That Jazz

Historian Frederick Turner turns his hand to fiction.

BY ALEXANDER C. KAFKA

Does the world really need another story about a brilliant, self-destructive jazz musician? As it happens, yes. Bix Beiderbecke, born a hundred years ago, had a preternatural talent for melodic shaping and elegant ornamentation. The sophisticated, exotic, and moody chordal progressions of his piano compositions sound like Ravel moonlighting at a speakeasy. (Check out "In a Mist.")

1929
A Novel of the Jazz Age
by Frederick Turner
Counterpoint, 416 pp., $25

The acclaimed nonfiction writer Frederick Turner, in a dazzling fiction debut, tells Beiderbecke's story in a deceptively straightforward, relaxed manner, like Bix and the boys playing "I'm Coming Virginia" at an afterhours jam. With the characters Herman Weiss and his sister Helen as common elements of both strands, the novel braids Beiderbecke's career with the fortunes of Al Capone's inner circle, especially "Machine Gun" Jack McGurn, of Valentine's Day massacre fame. Jack courts Helen—known to the mobsters as Lulu—and rescues her from a dreary life working in a movie-theater box office. Eventually, he marries her, mostly to ensure that she can't testify against him.

In recounting Bix's brush with Hollywood as a member of Paul Whiteman's band in the early days of the talkies, Turner also pulls in for cameos such silver-screeners as Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin. A lusty and generous Clara Bow plays a wonderful supporting role. And zipping in and out of Beiderbecke's jazz cosmos are Louis Armstrong, Bing Crosby, the bickering Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey, Hoagy Carmichael, and dozens of other bandstand luminaries.

The historical grounding and interlocking plot lines owe a debt to E.L. Doctorow's *Ragtime*, an inspiration that the publisher, Counterpoint, has played up. But it's actually Doctorow's *Billy Bathgate* that comes to mind in Turner's portrayal of the gangster life with its own peculiar but often mundane politics. Turner's narrative spins around a largely passive and distracted Bix, who is chronically preoccupied with a tune or a bottle, often both. Gravely alcoholic since adolescence—swilling the moonshine that could leave drinkers blind or brain-melted—the boy from Davenport, Iowa, would sneak down to the Mississippi to sit in with the bands entertaining steamer passengers. His parents sent him to Lake Forest Academy outside Chicago, from which he was expelled into Packingtown's musical nightlife, where he got his real education in thrall to Armstrong, King Oliver, and Jimmy Noone.

Bix is a "natural" musician, meaning he is an astonishing improviser and a self-taught cornetist who uses unorthodox fingerings. But it's also something of a euphemism for the fact that he can't read music well, especially the complex charts for the Jean Goldkette or Whiteman bands. Unkempt and underbathed, with crooked bow tie and shirttails out, he is wont to crack his knuckles before a show and lose his false tooth on stage. But his mentor,

Alexander C. Kafka is an editor at the Chronicle of Higher Education *and a contributing writer for Washington* City Paper.

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saxophonist Frank "Tram" Trumbauer, finds a way for Bix to play his sunshiny solos sitting several chairs in among the Goldkette trumpets while sitting out some of the bumpy ensemble passages. It's in that role that Bix comes to fame, first with Goldkette, then with Whiteman's band, the country's reigning white-jazz orchestra of the late 1920s. Bix and the rest of the Whiteman group became superstars of sorts, mobbed by crowds at a station stop while crisscrossing the country in a custom rail car. Other horn players copied Bix's solos note for note, and he becomes the darling of the Ivy League club crowds.

Turner gives a marvelous feel for what a grueling team sport jazz was in those days, with its endless road trips, hucksterish promoting, and merciless performance and recording schedules. He recounts a momentous "battle of the bands," with Bix and the Goldkette players taking on Fletcher Henderson's group at Roseland. He suggests the competitive but appreciative interplay between the white and black jazzers again when Bix escorts the visiting Ravel to the Cotton Club in Harlem to hear Ellington and makes a Delta pilgrimage to hear an ill-fated black horn prodigy named Kid Casimir at a roadhouse.

For decades Turner has been writing about explorers, American Indians, geography, jazz, and literary biography and culture. In *1929*, he brings his research and descriptive skills together commandingly to convey the country's vastness, the heavy light of the plains, the dingy particularities of slum backalleys, and his characters' quirks and charisma. He describes, for instance, a lodge in Lansing during a tense moment when Bix and the band are getting off a bus before playing for a restless Capone and his gang. The players disembark "under a gunmetal sky with the clouds rumbling away toward Flint and a sickly smear of yellow underneath them like an old hematoma." Capone "wants a good party, sure, but these guys look like they might be too juiced to play. And Jack's pissed because Lulu's half in the bag herself and is arms-around with the

Bix Beiderbecke

Bettmann / CORBIS

cornet player whose eyes are like floating clams."

Turner frames his story with Herman Weiss's reminiscences decades later at the Davenport jazz festival held yearly in Bix's honor. Over the last years of Beiderbecke's short life, Weiss distanced himself from Bix as the horn player decayed into a gentlemanly but grotesque, fawning, clowning, fall-down, blackout drunk. Yet this is not the story of a troubled talent whose success corrupts him and takes him down. It's the story of a troubled talent plagued by alcoholism—a tiger he can't hold, Bix sometimes calls it—before his career even begins and whose success never corrupts him. That's why we need to read another book about a brilliant, self-destructive jazz musician—because like fireworks whose sublime light both peaks and pales on their melancholy descent, the timbre and path are always distinct.

Turner and his characters are too smart to try to deconstruct the mystery of Beiderbecke. You can't parse a life any more than you can parse a one-of-a-kind sound. And you can't quite get that life in words any more than you can record that sound on wax. "The Bix they knew played beautiful horn and strange piano and drank. That was all." But in Beiderbecke's short, desperate, twenty-eight-year life, that was a lot. A complementary marvel is a nonfiction writer in his sixties suddenly bursting forth with a dizzying, heart-rending work of imagination. ♦

Seeing Evil

Analytic philosophy rediscovers the eternal struggle of good and evil. **BY THOMAS HIBBS**

Deism, wrote Pascal, is "almost as far removed from the Christian religion as atheism." Pascal had Descartes in mind, but he seems to have anticipated along the way much of the distinctively modern project of "natural religion," with its assumption of the easy transparency of nature and nature's God. The problem, as Pascal saw, is that pure reason demands lucid clarity, while the rational evidence for the existence of the God of Deism is decidedly mixed. The God of Deism inevitably becomes that God that failed.

In her interesting *Evil in Modern Thought: An Alternative History of Philosophy*, Susan Neiman examines in detail the enduring preoccupation of modern philosophers with the God of Deism—which is to say, with the question of the rationality and goodness of the universe. For Neiman, this is a version of the problem of evil, a problem that resides at the juncture of metaphysics

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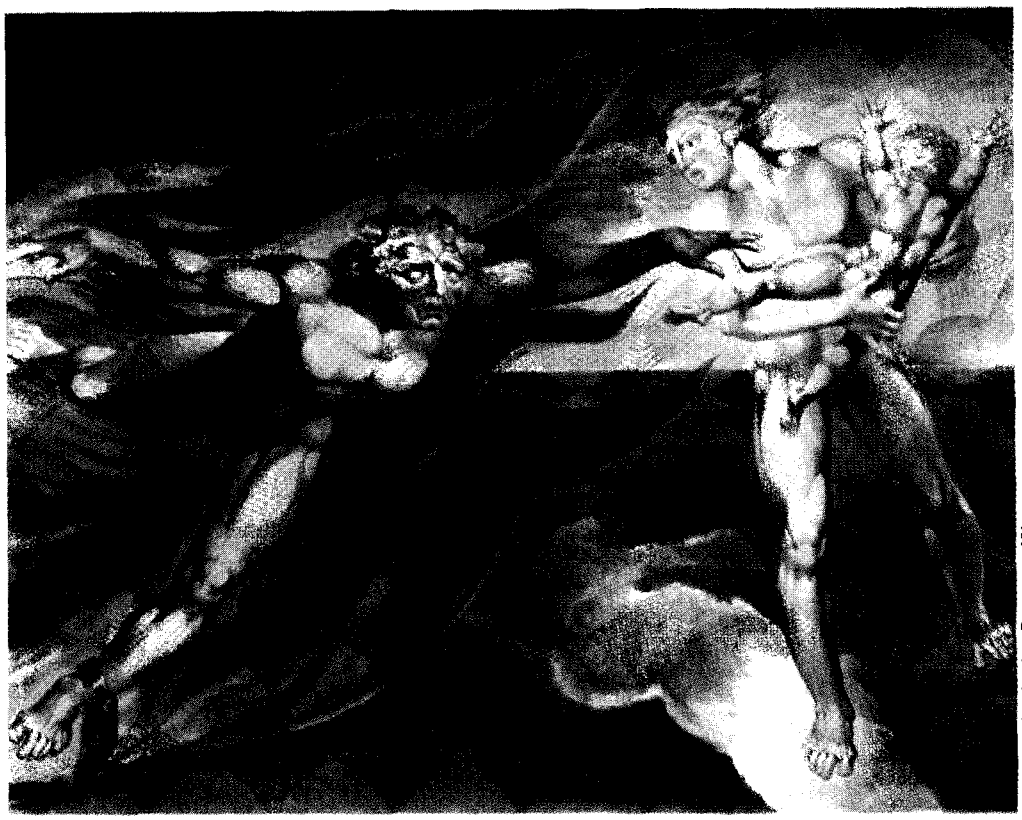
and ethics; it concerns "the intelligibility of the world as a whole." In its initial formulation, Neiman's thesis seems to bleed into every possible topic about the meaning of the universe. Yet her narrative of modern philosophy has a compelling, dramatic unity.

The now dominant way to tell the story of modern philosophy, she argues, is of "tortuously decreasing interest." As told in the dominant Anglo-American departments of philosophy, modern philosophy is a story about the quest for certainty, first in metaphysics and then in the more constrained arena of epistemology. The received interpretation of modern philosophy is flawed on "literary grounds alone," since it offers a "narrative of philosophers who act without intention." It seems that "philosophy, like some people, was prepared to accept boredom in exchange for certainty as it grew to middle age."



Tate Gallery, London / Art Resources, NY

William Blake's The Good and Evil Angels Struggling for Possession of a Child.

Neiman thinks she has discovered a hitherto unnoticed motive: the desire to solve the problem of evil. So peripheral had the problem of evil become by mid-century that Bertrand Russell's famous *History of Western Philosophy* contained more entries under "Egypt" than under "Evil." To this day, in analytic philosophy, the problem of evil is relegated to the specialized field of philosophy of religion. But Neiman's retelling of the history of philosophy claims that many modern philosophers are engaged in the quest for theodicy, the attempt to offer an explanation for the presence of evil in the natural world.

To test a thesis as broad and ambitious as this would require reading not just primary philosophical texts but also rival historical accounts. Neiman's *Evil in Modern Thought* is woefully short on the latter. She gives the impression that there is simply nothing available except the traditional story of the search for certainty, though, in fact, in the last decade or so, histories of modern philosophy have proliferated. And she ignores important twentieth-century treatments of evil, particularly that found in Paul Ricoeur's *The Symbolism of Evil*.

Evil in Modern Thought
An Alternative History of Philosophy
by Susan Neiman
Princeton Univ. Press, 358 pp., $29.95

But Neiman's narrative is nonetheless a contender. It sheds light not just on the writings of particular thinkers, but also on their relation to one another. And it helps us begin to understand certain facts about the modern period that current philosophers find baffling. Why was Kant so enamored of the thought of Rousseau? Why are so many modern philosophers obsessed with the question of providence in history? And why, even where they proclaim a defiant secularism, are so many moderns preoccupied with theological questions?

Contemporary scholars of Kant insouciantly ignore the influence on Kant's thought of Rousseau, whom they deem a soft, poetic sort of thinker. Neiman shows that Kant's admiration for Rousseau, whom he dubbed a second Newton, has to do with Rousseau's discovery of the "laws of providence" in the social world. Kant's elevation of Rousseau is explicable only on the supposition that the problem of evil—in Kant's terms, the problem of how apparently irrational evils in history can be reconciled with progress—is a fundamental issue for philosophy.

Neiman's history also restores the prominence of Hegel, Kant's successor and the modern philosopher most devoted to the philosophical demonstration of historical development. Hegel seeks to redeem particular evils by treating them as moments in a progressive history. A few centuries earlier, Thomas Hobbes could discern in the state of nature only the expression of brute, purposeless power. But

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Hegel sees a battle for recognition that starts history and sets humanity on the path toward the modern, liberal state.

Even Nietzsche, the philosopher now alternately scorned as an incoherent loon and celebrated as a deconstructive liberator, finds an intelligible place in Neiman's narrative. Nietzsche once confessed that the problem of evil haunted him from the age of thirteen. Of course, his writing eschews all theodicy—precisely because he is so haunted by it. He wants to erase the problem, which he thinks is "not given but created by those unequal to life": those who cannot embrace the world as it is and insist that it ought to be otherwise. Recoiling from religious and humanistic doctrines that promise escape, release, and redemption, Nietzsche repudiates all justifications. This is the point of his famous—and to many, inexplicable—teaching on the doctrine of Eternal Return, the willingness to say yes to the whole of one's life, indeed to the whole of human history, over and over again. The goal is to replace negation with affirmation, to uproot resentment caused by pain already suffered and fear of the future.

Another way Neiman traces the history of the topic is in terms of the divide between "is" and "ought." Twentieth-century ethicists spent years debating whether a moral obligation, an "ought," could be derived from a factual claim, an "is." Neiman uses the distinction to account for the disagreement between Hegel and Nietzsche. Hegel envisions overcoming "is" and "ought" through historical process: What ought to be will come to be, over time. Nietzsche abolishes the distinction: What is, simply is; any "ought" is an unwarranted imposition on phenomena that weak human beings find unpalatable.

For Neiman, this leaves us with Hannah Arendt's famous study of the trial of Adolf Eichmann and her thesis that the evil of Eichmann—emblematic of twentieth century's evil—had neither depth nor grandeur, but was banal, arising from a failure to take thought.

Amid the flood of literature on Arendt, Neiman has something new and interesting to say. She argues that Arendt's banality thesis is in part a deliberate construct; Arendt deliberately takes an ironic tone toward Eichmann—because "comedy," Neiman suggests, "undermines evil more than tragedy." In this way, Arendt undermines the attraction of the aesthetization of evil, the temptation to see evil as more attractive, more complex, and more creative than goodness. The banality thesis is a kind of theodicy, Neiman concludes, a way of stressing that evil, as a form of thoughtlessness, is not "impenetrable to reason." Neiman stresses the theological character of the theory of Arendt, whom she quotes as saying, "the world as God created it seems to me a good one."

But what sort of God is this? Clearly not the watchmaker God of Deism. It is not surprising that some, including the contemporary political theorist Jean Bethke Elshtain, have detected in Arendt's banality thesis the vestiges of the classical view—articulated most satisfactorily in St. Augustine's theological critique of Manichean dualism—that evil is the absence of good.

And yet, despite the theological tone of the interpretation of Arendt, and despite the repeated statements that modern philosophy is inseparable from theology, Neiman's book is surprisingly thin theologically. Even as it seeks to recover unduly neglected figures and topics, it contains some surprising exclusions of theological authors. There is, for example, only one passing allusion to Kierkegaard and a handful of references to Dostoyevsky. (Neiman does, however, make a nice point about the appearance of the devil to Ivan in the *Brothers Karamazov*: The devil is shabbily dressed, a mere shell of a man, a depiction that deprives the devil of any hope for grandiosity.) The most egregious omission in *Evil in Modern Thought* is Pascal, who seemed to anticipate the entire trajectory of modern philosophy's attempt to reckon with evil on the basis of reason alone.

Neiman asserts that the modern crystallized with a single event, the Lisbon earthquake of 1755. Philosophers from Kant to Rousseau and Voltaire commented on the destructive natural event, and Goethe (at age six!) was alleged to have experienced "doubt and consciousness for the first time." What rendered the earthquake so important, Neiman argues, was not the "weight of the disaster but the increased expectation."

The Enlightenment rested on a conviction that the universe is intelligible, that its law-like behavior is, or soon will be, transparent to human investigation. A similar conviction about transparency was also beginning to be applied to the social order, in the nascent social sciences of economics and politics.

The peculiarly modern problem of evil is thus a result, not of the revealed teachings of biblical religion, but of the natural religion of Deism. Neiman writes,

> Both grace and atheism leave the connection of virtue and happiness up to chance. Reason demands that the connection be systematic. . . . If the link between virtue and reward were accidental, the watch wouldn't work—to use another favorite Deist metaphor. What watchmaker would design a mechanism with the wheels and cogs turned randomly one way then sometimes another, without any warning whatsoever?

Even at the moment the modern, scientific project of theodicy was first getting under way, Pascal insisted on the "hiddenness of God": Whatever evidence there is of God's presence points not to the truth of Deism but to a redeeming God who enters history to take evil upon himself. Like Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky after him, Pascal agreed in advance with Neiman's concluding note that "the picture of reason as inherently systematic is fatal to any form of philosophy we will want to preserve."

Contemporary Anglo-American philosophers, whose impoverished historical sense Neiman seems bent on enriching, are likely to voice objections about the overly synthetic character of the book. But the real problem with her work is not that it includes too much, but too little: Its exclusions continue to reflect the anti-theological biases of much of contemporary philosophy. ♦

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Art Against the Reich

Ernst Barlach, German expressionist.

BY JACK FISCHEL

Born in 1870, Ernst Barlach was one of Germany's most prominent Expressionist artists at the time the Nazis seized power in 1933. And although he was uninterested in politics—in fact, even mildly welcomed the new government—he stubbornly resisted the Nazis' attack on art, as many of Germany's most acclaimed Modernist artists saw their compositions banned, their works removed from museums, and many of the most celebrated works of modernistic genius installed in the Nazi exhibition of degenerate art. Nazi leaders, such as Joseph Goebbels and Alfred Rosenberg, elevated the attack on abstract art to an unprecedented level when they attacked Modernism by linking it with Bolshevism and the Jews.

An Artist Against the Third Reich
Ernst Barlach, 1933-1938
by Peter Paret
Cambridge Univ. Press, 248 pp., $40

In a curious way, the Nazis took art very seriously, as Peter Paret documents in *An Artist Against the Third Reich: Ernst Barlach, 1933-1938*. Fancying himself an aesthete and an authority on music, painting, sculpture, and architecture, Hitler railed against much modern artistic innovation, which he equated with everything that was corrupt and subversive in Weimar culture. He blamed all forms of modernistic art on the Bolshevik-Jewish conspiracy he was determined to purge from Germany's cultural institutions.

In focusing on the work of Ernst Barlach, Paret provides us with not only an important intellectual biography of a nonpolitical artist who was forced to become a dissident, but also a lens by which to view the evolution of Hitler's war against abstract art. Barlach, a non-Jew as well as the "least public figure imaginable," drew the ire of the Nazi leadership because his works did not conform to the ideological criteria the National Socialist movement demanded. Hitler argued that the essence of art rested in its racial ideals, and artists were required to reflect this theme in their compositions. Works of art were expected to celebrate heroism and patriotism, as well as being conscious of the racial divide that separated non-Aryans from the Aryan Volk.

Although Barlach's prominence did not allow the Nazis to ostracize him entirely, he did become an object of controversy because his works expressed an intense and unbroken interest in the individual. Barlach's sculptures and paintings expressed their figures' emotions not as Germans but as human beings. More, Barlach often depicted the horror of war. In his Magdeburg monument, for example, with its easily identifiable references to World War I, Barlach focused on the tragedy of death rather than celebrating those who died. In concept and detail, the monument rejected the party's rhetoric of patriotic struggle—and both Alfred Rosenberg and Joseph Goebbels accused Barlach of besmirching the sacrifices of German soldiers during the Great War.

Despite the government's efforts to deny Barlach an audience, he stubbornly continued to paint and sculpt. When he died in 1938, an obituary in the SS magazine *Das Schwarze Korps* charged that his failure to accept National Socialism was a result of an immutable racial difference that separated Barlach from true Germans, or, at the very least, that he was corrupted by the Jews. For the Third Reich, Paret writes, "the artist's mission was to be a voice . . . that retold the National Socialist interpretation of the German race."

Although Barlach faced obstacles in the Third Reich that were shared by other artists, some were treated more harshly by the regime than he was. Still, though Barlach's experience never led to his internment in a concentration camp, what is exceptional about his life is that despite the artistic impediments, he continued to produce works of art that surmounted repression and have outlasted his Nazi opponents. ♦

Foto Marburg / Art Resource, NY

Barlach's World War I monument in Magdeburg.

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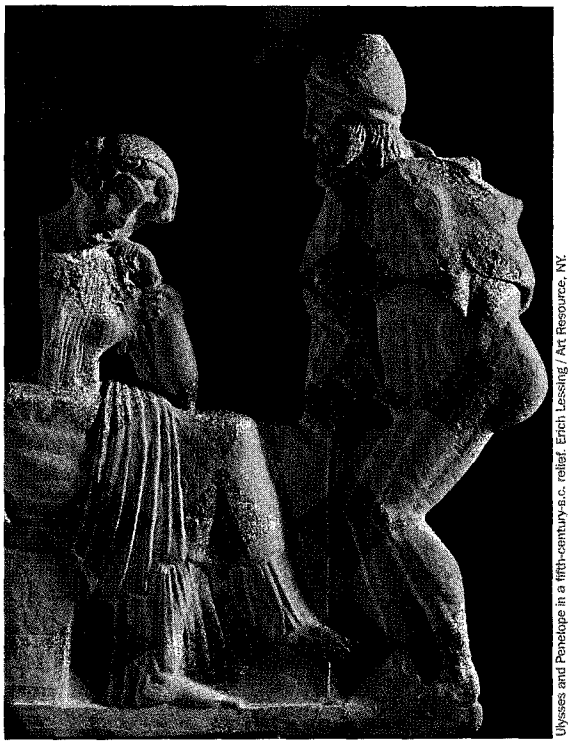
American Odyssey?

The return from Vietnam wasn't quite like Odysseus' return to Ithaca. BY CHRISTOPHER M. MCDONOUGH

During the recent hostilities in Iraq, I suspect many of us closely followed the troops' progress on TV while simultaneously hoping that all would have a safe homecoming. There is, sad to say, nothing new in these twin preoccupations: Literature in the West begins with Homer, whose *Iliad* and *Odyssey* deal with the fighting of a war and the return home from it, respectively. If the Greek epics have any transcendent quality, it is because every age has its conflict to which Homer seems to speak so directly. Simone Weil's profound essay "The *Iliad*, or The Poem of Force," for instance, read the Nazi occupation of France through a Homeric lens, while earlier the World War I poets had looked to the classics generally in framing their combat experience.

The jungles of Vietnam are far away from the dusty plains of Bronze Age Troy, but in his 1994 study *Achilles in Vietnam*, Jonathan Shay cogently juxtaposed the one Asian war with the other. Shay is a psychologist with the Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic in Boston, where he has enjoyed great success treating veterans who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the condition that was called "shell shock" in World War I and "nostalgia" in the Civil War. In his earlier work, Shay argued that Achilles' indignant wrath against his commander Agamemnon resembled "the first and possibly the primary trauma that converted subsequent terror, horror, grief, and guilt into lifelong disability for Vietnam veterans." In his new book, *Odysseus in America*, Shay turns his attention to the experience of the eponymous survivor in order to discuss the ways in which warriors return to civilian life.



Ulysses and Penelope in a fifth-century-B.C. relief. Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY.

Odysseus in America
Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming
by Jonathan Shay
Scribner, 352 pp., $25

Though Shay displayed an obvious admiration for Achilles in his first book, in this new book he clearly dislikes Odysseus. The hero of the *Odyssey* is, in his estimation, "a sleazy ass-kisser," beset by "grim and despicable failures of leadership," to whom he tries to be fair, though "everywhere I turn I stub my toe on the defects of his character." In this critical appraisal, Shay is bringing up the rear of a long anti-Odyssean tradition that includes Sophocles, Euripides, Virgil, Dante, and Tennyson. But while these literary luminaries faulted Odysseus for his guile, Shay focuses on his role as an officer failing in his duty to get his unit home safely.

Ultimately, Shay's interpretation grows less out of Homer than out of observations like this: "The men I work with in the VA Clinic have vast stores of bitterness over being blamed for the U.S. defeat in Vietnam. They feel that those really responsible have weaseled out of taking responsibility and the blame. . . ." In *Achilles in Vietnam*, Shay employed the Vietnam-era slang REMFs ("rear-echelon mother—ers") to describe the Iliadic gods who, at no personal risk, set the bloody events of the war into motion. But here he maintains that the buck should stop with Odysseus, even going so far as to prepare a case for the hero's court-martial.

So what's the evidence for this dereliction of duty? Let's start at the beginning. In the epic's invocation, we read that Odysseus strove "to save his own life and bring home his comrades, [but] he could not save them from disaster, hard as he tried. Yet it was their own recklessness which destroyed them all, the fools, who devoured the cattle of Helios the Sun-god." No matter what the Muse says, though, Shay contends that the comrades' disastrous end is in fact the fault of their commander. He is right that Odysseus occasionally exposes his men to unnecessary dangers, getting some of them killed as a result. There is the poorly planned pirate raid against the Cyclops, true enough, but most bothersome to Shay is the episode of the Laestrygonian fjord, where eleven of Odysseus' ships are destroyed by giants (the two-eyed kind).

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Now, in constructing his epic, Homer had apparently inherited two storylines about Odysseus' return—one in which he left Troy with twelve ships, and another in which he was at sea with only one. So to square matters the poet got rid of the extraneous ships in one fell swoop. But Shay condemns Homer's heartlessness here, and sticks up for "the lives of all those 'little people' [who] have been treated as just so many stage props, sometimes necessary, and sometimes clutter to be rid of because they're in the way of the Story." Granted, this is not Homer's most artful moment—even Homer nods, as the old saying goes—but these are fictional people, after all, and Homer has an epic story he's got to keep moving along.

All in all, Shay bends over backwards to exonerate the comrades. The critical moment, as specified in the invocation, concerns the sacred cattle, which Odysseus had been warned, and warned his comrades in turn, not to touch despite their desperate lack of supplies. During Odysseus' absence, however, his kinsman Eurylochus convinces the men to kill a few of the cows and risk the gods' wrath: "I would rather die at sea, gulping down the waves, than die slowly here on this desolate island." Eurylochus and the men choose to die by drowning rather than starvation, but Odysseus refuses this forbidden feast, opting instead to live. Shay doesn't discuss this passage, but this crucial decision—survival at all costs—is a part of the reason why Odysseus endures as a literary character.

But, as can be inferred, *Odysseus in America* is not a literary but a psychological study. Though the author begins to read the *Odyssey* "*as an allegory for real problems for combat veterans returning* to civilian society" (the italics are Shay's—the book is annoyingly littered with them), he soon starts to analyze the hero as though he were a real person.

"I imagine myself locking eyes with Odysseus," Shay writes, "perhaps in my office in the VA, perhaps across the table in the room where the veterans meet for their groups. I'm asking myself, how did this level of mistrust and manipulation come to be? So much wildness and so much violence, what am I missing?" I would have thought, before reading the book, that Odysseus might be a clear-cut case of PTSD, one who "goes off" and, in a fit of misplaced fury, kills the suitors who have overrun his home while he was gone. But no: According to Shay's diagnosis, he's just mad at his dad, who "failed to protect him from his villainous maternal grandfather." Frankly, it's disappointing to see the rich Homeric hero reduced to this tired Freudian chestnut.

The point is that Homer's world doesn't always feel like home. When Keats first looked into Chapman's Homer, he felt "*like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes / He star'd at the Pacific.*" We appreciate the epic's vast, even bewildering, cultural remove from us precisely in moments like the slaying of the suitors. Consider it from Odysseus' point of view. These men,

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108 in number, have been occupying his house for many years now, and all of them would like to occupy his throne and bed; some of them have even plotted against the crown prince, Telemachus. He cannot reclaim his home or kingdom so long as they're around. Machiavelli, a student of the classics, once noted that the effective ruler occasionally has to leave a corpse in the town square. Odysseus leaves over a hundred, and the message is clear: *The king has returned.* Overkill? Certainly, to our way of thinking, but we are not Bronze Age warrior-kings in a work of fantasy.

Concerning this episode, Shay wonders why Athena couldn't "just go to his house and shake the aegis at [them]? Or she could ask her dad to land a thunderbolt in front of the door every time one of the suitors approaches. . . . Aegis and thunderbolt—works every time." What-if arguments like this make for poor literary criticism because they deny the poet the fullness of his point. Homer's story does not call for Olympian "shock and awe"; it requires the hero's own bloody intervention. Nonetheless, Shay's desire to imagine a different ending to the story reveals the quality that makes him an expert healer to those suffering combat trauma—namely, his faith that even the most damaged veteran can return with violence avoided and dignity intact. The book's real contribution is not as a description of Homer but rather as a prescription for homecoming.

"Odysseus has shown us how not to return home from war," Shay writes, which is to say, alone and dangerous. In his clinic's treatment program, community and trust are emphasized as the paths for successful readjustment to civilian life. Based on his extensive work in this area, Shay advocates a series of measures that would foster such community and trust early in military training with the intention of heading off many of the causes of PTSD. In this respect, the target audience for Shay's book is not students of ancient Greek literature, but the leaders of our military institutions. If anything can be inferred from the introduction by Senators John McCain and Max Cleland, both combat veterans and members of the Armed Services Committee, it seems those leaders are listening.

As well they should. According to one etymology, Odysseus' name meant "the man of pain," a reference both to his own sufferings and to those he caused. As Shay shows, the world of those afflicted by PTSD is etched round with a hurt surprising in its scope and intensity. He cites the testimony of a highly decorated sailor who, having never fully reintegrated into civilian life after seeing so much combat, seeks solace in masochism: "What happens is, I like pain. . . . If I get hurt bad it helps the nightmares go away faster." No veteran should come home like this, and it is in our nation's interest that, rather than awaiting such ruinous aftermath, soldiers be instructed in the lessons of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—both how to fight when fighting's required, and how to come home when the fighting's done. ♦

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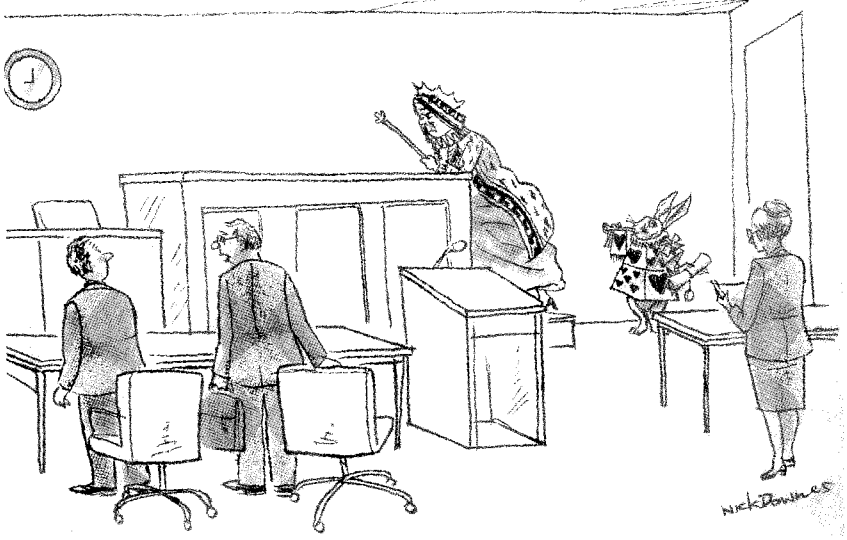

"We got an unlucky draw."

Books in Brief

***Remembering Patsy* by Brian Mansfield (Rutledge Hill, 95 pp., $14.99).** Everybody likes Patsy Cline. Most of the popular country singers of the 1950s and 1960s have disappeared, known only to country music devotees. Who listens to Minnie Pearl anymore? Or Faron Young? But though Patsy Cline died forty years ago, her *Greatest Hits Collection* still sells millions of copies each year.

Her story—popularized in the 1985 film, *Sweet Dreams*—is both dramatic and sad. Like many country singers, Cline grew up poor and sang gospel as a girl. Her voice was both tender and big. She had great material too, including "Walkin' After Midnight," "I Fall to Pieces," and Willie Nelson's "Crazy"—stark, sentimental, richly melodic songs that, in an age of boundless irony, have acquired a certain exotic appeal. And then she died, at thirty, in an airplane crash. Her "lively eyes," writes Brian Mansfield in *Remembering Patsy*, "haunt us from black-and-white photographs."

Mansfield's little book features about forty photos of Cline posing, performing, chatting amicably with other country stars. Most of these are generic publicity shots, but one—of Cline standing before a radio station microphone—shows something more. In it, the camera looks up at a woman with a splendidly full figure who wears a smart black hat and an elegantly cut suit. In nearly all the other pictures, Cline smiles widely. But here her face shows both intelligence and determination. It's a singular face, broad and a bit tough, but sensuous and honest, too. Here, one thinks, is a woman one would like to know.

Remembering Patsy also includes anecdotes that confirm this view. Cline rose to stardom because, in addition to being talented, she was sassy and self-assured—"road-wise," as Willie Nelson described her. She was no diva, but a woman who brought her checkbook to recording sessions and, during the delays, paid her bills. "I respected her," notes singer Jim Ed Brown, "because she was what she was. There were no airs to Patsy"—a quality her records can't conceal.

The singer and composer Roger Miller also recalls that Cline "loved to laugh. She had a good soul and a good heart. She was a really good person, a person you wanted to have in your corner." And who could ask for a better tribute than that?

—Brian Murray

***Reading Lolita in Tehran: A Memoir in Books* by Azar Nafisi (Random House, 368 pp., $23.95).** The 1979 Iranian Revolution produced such obvious brutalities as men lashed for planning parties and female prisoners "married" to their guards, raped, and executed. But Azar Nafisi, in her evocative autobiography *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, documents the subtler brutality in the regime's control over daily life. Everything was regulated, from how women should laugh to how men should wear their shirts. Deviations were punished with whips, jails, and humiliating searches.

In this totalitarian state, Nafisi taught the novel—a genre renowned for its attention to private life. She was eventually barred from the University of Tehran for her refusal to wear the veil. For two years, before she emigrated to the United States in 1997, Nafisi taught an underground class for women. Along the way, Nafisi discovered how a totalitarian regime makes its subjects feel unreal and "fictional."

In her close, passionate readings, the ayatollahs are compared to Humbert Humbert, who forced Dolores Haze to become his fantasy. The Islamists' obsessive repudiation of America reminded Nafisi of Elizabeth Bennet's determination to find fault with Darcy. These passages—and a bravura section recounting how her class put *The Great Gatsby* on trial—teach as much about the works Nafisi loves as about the country she left.

Today, countless Iranian students are joining in Nafisi's fight for the right to a private life. Humans are the product of a tension: We share a human nature, and therefore a natural moral law. If we did not, how could we condemn the ayatollahs, or champion Lolita over her rapist? But we are also individuals with our own peculiar and private dreams. A society that forgets either half of this tension will soon sink into brutality.

—Eve Tushnet

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"Bragg . . . is known to believe that he has become a target within the paper because he is close to fellow Southerner Raines, who had to approve all his assignments. Bragg is renowned for his portraits of hard-living, hard-drinking Southerners. . . . That kind of writing about Southern characters earned him a Pulitzer for his *Times* work in 1996."

—Washington Post, *May 24, 2003*

Parody

York Times

National Edition Final
Across the country: Sunny, turning cool and cloudy due to the burning of fossil fuels by inferior non-Manhattanites and the Republican Party's historical failure to craft a credible energy policy.

DAY, JULY 27, 2007 — ONE DOLLAR CHEAP

CONGRESS DECLARES MARTIAL LAW IN TENSE, PARTISAN 218-217 VOTE

Fistfights Mar Roll Call After Market Crash Devastates Economy

By RICK BRAGG

RIOTS IN STREETS

GORE: "I'M IN CHARGE"

THE OVAL OFFICE, July 26 — Henry Hyde knows 'em. The tears. Them salty tears, momma's tears, the tears that trickle down, tickling you like crawfish, trickling and tickling when you just can't stop them. He's never talked about them but we all know he knows them, knows them like we know them, because we've all got a momma, and somewhere he's got a momma, too.

Then Tom DeLay spoke up, his voice sweet as a bottle of gin on a Ju-lye morning. You know the sound. Just a little plash and glug, like an egret getting his tippy toes wet in the shallows of the lush, mushy, murky, funky, stinky, redolent, olfactorious, and all-round good-smellin' dampness of the Big Muddy lapping up against the levee here in the nation's capital. The kind of sound that makes you want to just sigh, "Iddnat cute?"

The vote don't matter. The future of [illegible]'t matter, no more than [illegible] old pair of overalls mat[illegible]d, worn-out coon dog [illegible] You have to know the feel of the lonesome road, you have to know the feel of an old, worn-out coat with the wind blowing through it that's the last thing you own to know that the vote don't matter. Nope. Maybe there was a vote, maybe there wasn't. It just don't matter. There's something about the taste of a fried oyster po' boy, just like they serve them up here in Washington on a Ju-lye morning in Alabama. Don't need more than a teeny tiny bit of mayonnaise. Not if it's made right. Not if it's made with love, a momma's love, the kind of love that sounds like the call of a whippoorwill on a Ju-lye morning.

Nibble, nibble, nibble. A family of beavers is building a dam underneath Bill Frist's desk, where the Mississippi River flows through the office of the Senate Majority Leader, as he reaches

(See REPUBLIC DESTROYED, p. A9)

Boston police in riot gear douse flames from Molotov cocktails thrown by teens. Community activists differed, attributing the anger to pervasive disenfranchisement caused by systemic white racism or to rising prices for drugs.

the weekly Standard
JUNE 9, 2003

[illegible]ticism Blamed for Deaths

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A Distinctly American Approach to War

Bruce Berkowitz is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution.

You can learn a lot about a country by its art, by its literature, and, for good or bad, by how it wages war. Let us look back, then, on how the United States has fought in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other conflicts since the end of the cold war.

What we see is the development of an "American style of war," reflecting both our capabilities and our values, with at least three distinct features:

The first is a *reluctance to take casualties.* During the 1970s and 1980s pundits often talked about a "Vietnam syndrome"—a fear of any operation that might cost American lives, subsequently disproved by Desert Storm. But the reluctance to suffer casualties was more than just a reaction to Vietnam.

Democracies run on public support; politicians who send soldiers to long, costly wars lose support—and lose office. So far, this has not been a problem. Casualties in the two gulf wars, for example, were light. But it makes one wonder whether we could attempt a more costly operation, such as a defense of South Korea.

The second feature is a *reluctance to inflict casualties.* There is always controversy whenever U.S. forces inadvertently hit noncombatants. But Americans have little taste even for inflicting enemy military casualties. Recall the "Highway of Death" during the first gulf war, when U.S. air attacks on fleeing Iraqi forces turned into a turkey shoot. U.S. leaders feared the public reaction and cut the operation short—leaving Saddam Hussein a threat.

Today the United States has a defense policy that aims to minimize the death and destruction of warfare—the very qualities that define war. Few countries have held themselves to this standard. Just look at the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s, Russia's war in Chechnya, or the various wars between India and Pakistan.

The third feature is *sensitivity to international opinion.* Unlike France (which regularly intervenes in its former colonies without consulting anyone), American leaders try to show that the United States has support abroad. Even so, U.S. leaders do not equate the "United Nations" with "world opinion." Operation Iraqi Freedom (like operations in Panama, Haiti, and Kosovo) showed that U.S. leaders reject the idea that the UN has special moral authority.

One can argue whether this approach makes sense from a military point of view, but we need to prepare accordingly. The Defense Department should spend more on weapons that minimize collateral damage and create larger stockpiles to conduct the kinds of operations we plan today. We also need more networked communications and databases, rapid response capabilities, and the ability to provide better covert logistic support.

If Americans have a phobia about enemy casualties, we need to invest more in nonlethal weapons, such as stun guns and immobilizing devices, especially if we hope to defeat rogue states and terrorists, both of which are capable of using civilians as human shields.

This approach to war may not be easy, but it reflects values we can be proud of. So we need to prepare to win wars "in the American style"—and be aware of the risks we run in doing so.

— Bruce Berkowitz

Paid for by the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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